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GIRLS! GIRLS!! ISSUE

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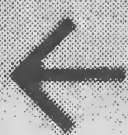
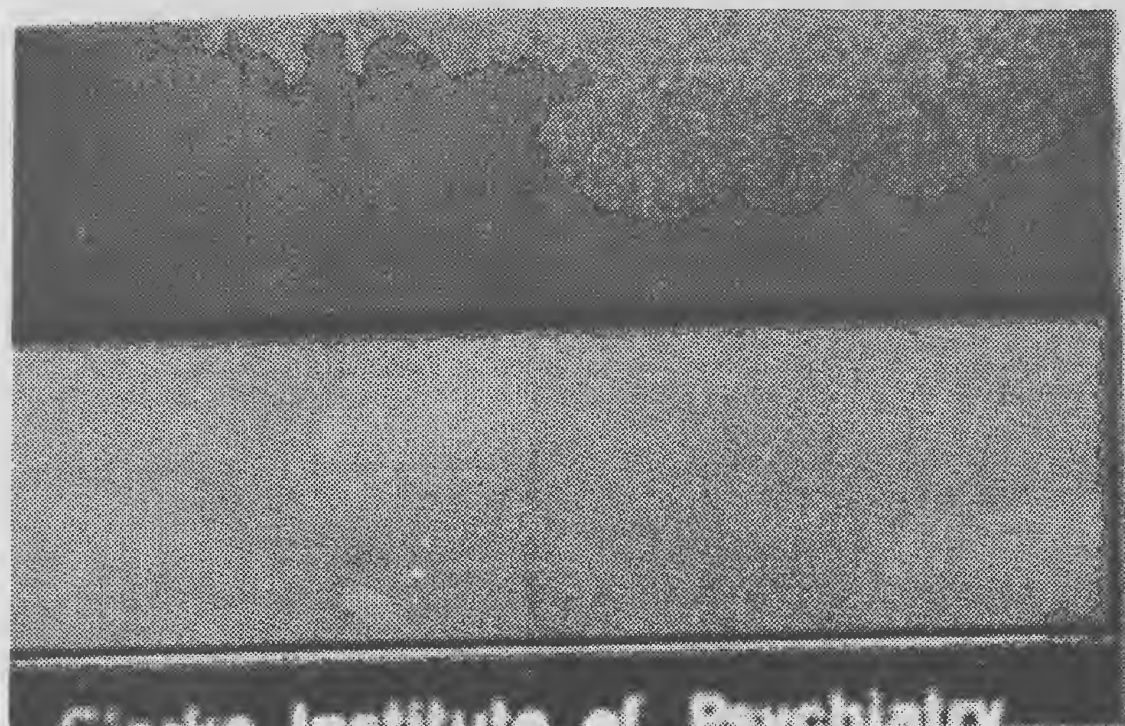
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NEON WOMEN IN TORONTO ARE MORE THAN DIVINE



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When man or woman climbs into the pages of a magazine it should be with that same enlargement of the intelligence accessible to the young when they first climb into bed with each other.

--William Carlos Williams

Editors

George Dean Higton

Sheila Wawanash

Contributing

Verbal

Angie Baldassarre
Olivier Cossard
Joel Dubin
Ron G.
Kirk Lapointe
Lola Michael
Max Mouse
Peter L. Noble
Rosy Ruin
Alasdair Russell
Vanessa Shah
Brad Thrasher
Paul Wilson

Visual

Bobbe Besold
Barb Bjarnson
Adrian Bryan-Brown
Gail Bryck
Jim Chambers
Joanne Hovey
Huziak
Henry Kahanek
Susan King
Anne Milne
Peter L. Noble
Steve Rasmussen
Blair Rodger
Linda Rultan
Eddie Steiner
Mike Visser

Advertising and Circulation

Mart Kaarmann
John Trudeau

Kaardeau-Shades Advertising
86 Bloor West, Ste. 105, Toronto M5S 1M5

Distributed by Gordon and Gotch Ltd.,
55 York St., Toronto M5J 1S4

"SHADES will be a journal about rock'n'roll music and related eruptions in Toronto".

That's what one of your editors proposed in the very first issue. Oddly enough we might say it again. But of course we can say more than that, too. Because in a sense we're starting again.

For us every issue has been a fresh start: an experiment in how we might, for the moment, focus articulation about entertaining arts all around us. Our first concern has been to *be* in fact what we speak, that is, entertaining. We have also sought to speak in the full range of tongues that we have been finding and making available: we've taken the whole span of what's going on as our own preserve and hunted game and made our discoveries and then passed them on from the cutting edges, the lines of division we've found in our culture.

And the main thing we've found is that we're not alone. Over a year and a half we've been growing, learning our riffs and inventing some new ones. (In this too we have not been alone.) Now with a steadily growing set of contributors and an expanding audience, we have some announcements.

SHADES will be publishing monthly.

We are nationally distributed.

We have added Kaardeau-Shades Advertising to our organization.

Going back once again to that originating editorial, we find a number of questions to which there are still not definitive answers (which may be a way of saying they *are* really questions) and the fully fledged claim that there's no turning back, that we must accept that new wave saved rock'n'roll's life, that a collision in culture and politics has given rise to "an epic struggle." At that point rock'n'roll was the focus for a generation's expression of itself to itself and - given the fact that it was then excluded and misrepresented - by itself. It still is, in changing conditions, and for more than one "generation". SHADES continues to find it is much of our business to reflect and reflect upon that as a turning point.

Yet music - then and even more now - is an instance, the clearly cut case of collisions that animate general culture. When you turn on a dime, if you're keeping your eyes and ears open, you can see some connections. That is also our mandate at SHADES even when we're not labouring all our conclusions at once.

If we set out to dictate we might well accumulate all the more dedicated followers of fashion: which isn't exactly the point. Mind you, fashion to us is not quite beside the point. We've made it one of our main points of interest in this very issue. How we package ourselves is the most intimate form of all public arts. So we are presenting various changes rung on the theme of putting it on and taking it off.

It is also our "dance" and our where-are-women-at-today issue. But you don't need *us* to tell you much more. Let us entertain you. We aim to provoke thought and some passing fancies in fun-loving readers. Draw and quarter your own conclusions for now.

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On the knock-em-out, drag-em-through (and did anyone notice it?) front, there are stories that aren't worth much telling. The **Manifestival** came without much publicity here from New York, turned into a four-day, three-ring circus, the **King of Hearts** broke, everyone left rather worse for the wear and not many came back for the **Fantasie Ball**. Maybe everyone stayed home to read **Henry Miller** because it seemed like another *Black Spring*.

Then again it might have only been spotty, cause there's been compensations. A club with a really great name is trying its wings and looks promising. Hope it takes off at **Exile on Main Street**, Main at Gerrard. Meanwhile there are rumours (are there ever not rumours when Rosy Ruin's around?) of new clubs and the old standby venues have seen some good times. Evenings filled with the **Edge** are reported elsewhere in this ish; the **Bev** lit up, and took fire (lasers, no less!) for **The Everglades** and I won't believe that's a band that is quitting. **The Turning Point** has settled into being unsettling, and there have been nights that it was a shame to miss out at **The El Mo**. C'est la vie on the scene.

But I think the best thing that's starting in clubs are the weeks of different-bands-every-evening, in and out of town, like at **Larry's Hideaway**, recently, in **Guelph** and elsewhere. Who gives a fuck whether it's **The Definitive New Music** if lots of bands can work out and plenty more people start having more fun?



Margarita (right) opens the New improved Rose

For speaking of women who are not short of fantastic, I've finally exerted some influence on editors. They've got our (the whole world's) **Debra Harry** outside of these pages. Debra hasn't passed through for awhile. So we haven't talked to

And **Geordie McDonald** was recently in **Montreal** to do a concert with his **Percussion Sculpture**. He came back full of news about cafe 'n' culture scenes there, where it's happening again, it would seem, with a difference. Among avant artists and intellectuals, separatism is last year's news and political life is concentrating around the **Rhinoceros Party**, which fielded fifty-plus candidates there — and a few in Ontario, among them **Greg Curnoe** (the painter and founding member of **Nihilist Spazm Band**), in London, Ont.



The most fun that I, **Rosy Ruin**, think that I had from last time to this, however, was something else altogether again. In **New York** they would have called it a loft session or the hottest new venue in town. Here in **Toranna** it was just a party with two warehouse bands. The party itself was terrific (more drama just waiting to piss than I've seen for quite a long while) and the crowd quite uncategorizable. For the longest time I saw no-one I knew and met plenty more. It didn't start to get sceney or trendy till it was all over as far as the really excellent bands that were playing. They were (and this is big news for us all) **Mystery Boys** and **the Busted Buns**. The first was quite good and had the best logo I've seen. The second were **GREAT**. At least I think they were. I was dancing much more than I listened; and that is a sign. The band was better than good (as in merely). And the lead singer/guitarist, a woman who is something classically fresh for what passes these days, was not short of fantastic. In fact, I haven't seen many around here that I've liked as much since **Mickey** and **Michael** (and that was more than a year ago now) and what did that get me? Or them, come to that. I'll make sure you hear more of the Buns. And **2 Berkley St.**

Then even I can't help saying I like the cover on the **Demics** record. It's called *Talk's Cheap* (maybe that's what I like) and it's a good one.



By Rosy Ruin

But the social event of the season was - get this a **spring wedding** which joined in the bonds **Freddy Pompeii** and **Margarita Passion** (if you don't know who they are, count yourself out or look elsewhere: start at **Secrets** and fashion). The bride wore an off-off-white sheath, in **Spandex** of course, topped by some loose leopard. Her yellow flowers were caught by **Lucasta**, late of **The B-Girls**, who also got the groom's garter in black with the cute little gold ball and chain. **Mickey Skin** was overheard saying **Lucasta** got everything. Except **Freddy** himself. There was an appropriate reception from which **F** and **M** left for **Niagara Falls** in a limo.

And all over town things are moving and shaking at radio stations and record labels. **CFNY** (not perfect but all that there was except **CING** for awhile) has gone into receivership. What happens next is of course up for grabs. A new (?) government (?) may wreak some havoc as well with the hopes, plans and dreams of all those who've been trying to get **Glendon College radio** (CJRT cable) out to us.

But for the moment we can stay home and listen to **Bomb** — shells. **True Confessions** single, long promised, is at last delivered. So is **The Last Pogo** album. It's a very commendable effort, with several surprises. **The Secrets** sound like they play plastic ukeles (they don't, nor do they sound like they do live), and **the Scenics** and **Cardboard Brains** sound rather better than anyone ever remembers them being. Most is finely predictable if you know the local bands represented: **The Everglades** have done good work executing a "Rock'n' Roll Cliche" and so have **The Mods**, though of course there's a difference. **Drastic Measures** has come pretty far since one of your snarky editors was so nasty to them in **SHADES No. 2**. **The Ugly** is indeed high energy and following them with **the Ishan Band** — which may be one of my favorite cuts — is just how it should be. There are some incongruous unities here between what the two-day event acknowledged as not quite on speaking (or easy listening) terms. Since **SHADES** has dedicated itself to a similar principal, I won't say that it's right or wrong, or indifferent. You can read production and cover art-critical stuff somewhere else as I find that those subjects have been quite obsessively covered and I find them quite boring. I will tell you, though, that the hand and the shoulder inside, on the sleeve, belong to **your editors**. And **Bomb** didn't know it.



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PERFORMING ANIMA(L) POETRY

By Sheila Wawانش

Gilli Smyth's Mother Gong, Daavid Allen's present Gong and New York's Zu Band were all in town for a few hectic days in mid-March. Their performance dates included the misfortunes of the Manifestival at Complication Hall and two nights at the King of Hearts, which was closed down by the second. A visitation that might have provided a forum for our local dispirations instead focuses problems of organization efficiency and the (still) pervasive lack of common cause or interest that amounts, in effect, to clique positions. Just when we thought it was — at least and at last — too late for that kind of (deletion).

Anyway, it couldn't have happened to nicer people: the 24 who came from New York in their old yellow school bus and those who worked with and supported them on the local scene. The Manifestival concept went on to triumph at Hartford and their other stops on the road. For those disappointed and potential fans in Toronto, who just didn't know that the circus had come to town, we have the consolation of this conversation with one of its most engaging performers. Additional poetry, some of which she performs and publishes in other contexts, has been provided by Gilli.

Listen to the words you say marigolds
Floating on air
write the words you think
watching my fear
listen
Life falling all around

Don't watch my eyes
they tell you wrong
don't touch my fingers,
they leap like frogs
don't hear my words
they belong to tomorrow

O sun, o world: then shall
my mind be new again
its demons downed.
Then,
No sharp confusion in
the painted mirror, nor
slamming of the iron door
to the corridor of eyes.
Then,
Quick and clear, we see.
Staunch our meeting place

I must have misunderstood.
It's only the marigolds tapping at the glass.
I can't have heard
these words through the pool.
There is
only the water splashing the reeds a little
Now the woodpecker taps,
in the breathless hour
learn his song
fly with the swallow
leave me still.

GILLI: The thing is if you can infiltrate, even to some extent, what you want to say, One has to not make compromises, or to compromise in a way that you don't feel compromised.

SHADES: Well perhaps we should start with some I hope not too tedious stuff. Like history.

G: Oh well, I'm used to that.

S: How did Gong evolve, and how did Mother Gong come out of that concept, then?

G: The Gong started in about 1969, with this record we made, Daavid (Allen) and I, *Magic Brother, Mystic Sister*, and it lasted all the way through the '70's up until — well, I left in '75. cause I had a couple of babies and I couldn't manage everything. Daavid left in '76 and then gradually people drifted away. I think it was just too many strong directions in one band, actually. Everyone who was in the band at that time has now got their own group. Steve Hillage has got his own group, Daavid's got his own group, I've got my own group. It's like an enormous family and it was a very intense experience. We lived together all the time in one house, and we worked together and during those years it was fantastically intense. Then it was too many strong directions pulling: not opposite directions, but different directions. I think it had to break up really.

My part in it was — ah, how to express it — the feminine principle. Raising of consciousness through the resurgence of the feminine principle in the world. You know, like counteracting to what I see as the excessive male principle which is pollution and exploiting nuclear power. I don't mean it in men and women. I mean the female principle in men as well as women.

S: And expressing that in some vehicle.

G: Yes, that's what I was doing all those years in Gong, because I was the only woman. Then, when I left, well I had the babies, and I didn't do anything for a couple of years cause I wanted to look after them.

S: Of course, as women, we would call that "doing nothing"! Raising children is really a hell of a lot to do.

G: Well yeah, absolutely and I wanted that full experience too. But then actually, ultimately your creativity goes roaring on and you just can't stop it. So then I made this album called *Mother*, which was partly a distillation of those experiences. But it was not domestic mother, it was more like the mother — goddess idea, not anything really to do with children and house and those kind of relationships. It's more to do with women in relation to men in the world, I would say, and how to work out the eternal struggle of the yin and yan.

S: Well, we've all been going through enormous changes. Are you at the stage where you would care to say what the female principle means to you at this point? Is it evolving in your mind?

G: To me, it is, the constructive element in things. It's the nurturing, the taking care, the creative, the developing, the poetic, the sensitive, the psychic, the communication by telepathy, the invisible bonds between people. Love of all kinds, spreading out and becoming a creative thing. Because what I would call the extreme of the male ego tends to be destructive, tends to quarrel and fight and be in territorial competition all the time. I mean, everybody knows that and it's not an attack because I don't find myself in the situation of being at all anti-men. I've always lived with a man, and I work with men. I work with men, coincidentally, because they happen to be the best musicians around. If there were women musicians, I'd love to have them, but I haven't come across any who are as good as the men that I've found, so it's just been that way. I have been dubbed a homiophobe, actually.

S: If you've got anything to say and you're female you get dubbed something.

G: Well, it's just been because I work with men and I find that extraordinary, I really do. I don't believe in cutting oneself off. I mean, workshops and getting women together is fine but we must get into the mainstream, right up there in the arena. And the central arena is where the men are because that's where politics is happening and music is happening. One has to go right to the top and start changing things from there, and putting yourself to one side, the alternative is not strong enough.

S: Well the separatist movement seems to have largely exhausted its energy.

G: Oh has it? I don't know. I mean as a gesture it is quite important: it can be done. Women do have to find their identity, they're so conditioned out of the idea that they have an identity and it's hard to escape that early conditioning. If you're pretty and nice and the rest of it, you can get by without having any soul at all. You can exist without a soul rather than becoming fully responsible for yourself as a full human being.

S: Well that's either true or completely false. Surely we have to assimilate what is a role restriction and move on from there.

G: But people try to push you in that situation and I find I have to resist it. Quite strongly and, at the same time, not getting involved in ego battles. Working with men that's a very delicate tightrope to walk. Even the most evolved and nicest of men would sometimes rather you were like the stereotype and if you're not...

A NOT SO LOVING POEM

I wish you no harm, no
I would not have you dead, nor
grinning wounded on the field of battle
lips stretched on toothmarked pain
Yet harm breaks from me, escapes restraining hands
and fights, with drawn swords of the mind and
scrapes
where most hurt comes stabbing in
your demons march roughshod, expect
all demons else to feel as they shouting
pride of body to the sky,
and shake a fist
at all those who are not
also riding high

LOVE POEM

When you fold in on me, and soothe me
with the still of mountains
and sunned skin touches another so like
itself as skipping fish in dreaming sea
When you lie there with your face between my
breast and arm, and gentle our fear to a slower
moment

And rhythm, tumbling and celestial, strikes
us with its sharpening octaves,
when the greenness of the grey mountain looms
through the window till we hang, small birds, under
and cavi of child and dog and anxiety of woman
fleck

in with the sun, tiny patches on the day's coat
Then the mist of silver ghosts files through
the room and the light breaks into

shattered bowls and
the end comes: except that now I am all
All the sunned and skipping and silver and still,
Looming mountain and present private ghosts.

A RAINY POEM

Why does it have to be like this", he said,
he said, raising his voice.
Through clenched teeth the bitter syllables drip
remains the fiery eye.
There is no salve, love, love is no salve,
love is a gentle ointment
remains the hurt. The inside of the afternoon
Gone red, then grey.
Locks up the box of our bewilderment

I sit
leaden head on iron hands.
He is gone.

The day
is a burst balloon
and the house empty.

You stride
endlessly down the road of shreds,
kicking away the rags
of the day's tattered jacket

We have won,
we are together
and yet.

S: Well, sometimes I wonder if the real situation for women right now is not more like having responded to the demands made upon us, and self-generated, so that we expect too much of ourselves. Sometimes our strength is sapped being all - supportive.

G: How can you be too strong? I think it's a sort of spiritual test. Women have been given a lot to overcome and I think the future depends on

them. That's what I mean by the resurgence of the feminine principle. If that doesn't happen, the world will blow up very soon in a holocaust.

S: But we need something back, too, for all that we're trying to do.

G: Well it may be a question of spiritual resilience. So often where men will plunge their heads in their hands in despair and say I just can't go on, you know, it's too much, women will just carry on doing what she has to do.

S: How would you describe what it is that you're trying to do in performances? You don't fit in conventional categories of a "singer", or front lady for a band.

G: Yeah, I know. I started as a poet, basically. I published a few books of poetry and started doing poetry readings when Daavid was working with Soft Machine in England in '67 or so. And then I started kind of developing on the idea of the voice as an instrument, like I'm doing now, kind of moving, virtually, with the music, because it struck me very forcibly one day that if you restrict yourself to poetry reading you're talking to the already convinced. People who come and listen to straight poetry already like poetry anyway and so your audiences are very small and rather elite. And if you really want to get something over, you have to get it over to a lot of people. You need the kind of audience rock music has. If you mix the two, you can touch the kind of people who resist a poem. You can get directly through to them if you do it in a musical way, so I started doing it in a way that seemed to me most aesthetically pleasing, but it's not conventional. In the early days people were always saying it's not commercial, it won't work, it's very peculiar, things like that. I just carried on doing it because it was what I wanted to do. Then at a certain point, the Gong became very fashionable and people were coming round saying how marvellous and how amazing. And I still went on doing what I was doing. And that's how it's been: people love it or hate it and I just keep on because that's how I see the pattern of words and music and that's how I want to do it.

There are things I feel really strongly about, things I want to put over in words. But in order to put them over quite strongly they have to be very simplified, in a very accessible form, and a form that is not going to make people resist. If you can use the most seductive sounds and backing so people will open their ears, basically. Because it's so easy to make people shut their ears and resist, if you get the wrong tone. You have to find a tone that will make people melt toward you and that's why I developed the kind of singing I do because I really wanted to contact people, make them feel what I was feeling. I couldn't do that singing a line someone else has written.

S: So there's something of the siren's song in the way you use your voice.

G: Well yes. Just finding the really basic tones that will strike the chords in people, you know. It's hard to explain exactly. But there are certain sounds of the universe that appeal and those are the sounds that I hear and want to transmit so that people, without knowing why, open up and then listen to what I am saying.

S: And what is it that you're really saying? It seems to me that you are expressing and experimenting and laying the groundwork for placing different facets and aspects of sexual roles. And some of them are very far from deliberately seductive, like the cackling witch or the love machine. At many points you are at some farther pole from the sentimental or soft.

G: Well that's the magical element, witchcraft. Being in touch with the elemental and psychic and it's almost forgotten these days. The witch is neither good nor bad. The witch is someone who can use forces in nature and it's frightening because there is certain knowledge. It can be cruel, like nature, or loving. It has no particular morality to it, it just is. That's why I use the witch, really. And then there's the Prostitute, which comes in because I think the prostitute really is the scapegoat of society, the lowest social position. And there's no reason, except in the eyes of the law. The happy hooker does not exist except as revenge on the society that put you there, as a way of getting some of your own back. In all the prostitution papers I've read, hostility is the only way to remain in some small way superior. They're innocent victims, actually. I mean, look at the number of words there are for promiscuous women. I do a poem on that, actually. There are no really rude words for men, you can only call him a bastard, while for women there is this long list and many are hostile, really obscene in the kind of contempt they display. The idea of women as dangerous in their promiscuity goes back to St. Augustine, who saw women as lewd and lascivious and seducing men who were chaste and pure, corrupting men from the true path of virtue.

S: It might be fear of our capacity for pleasure. Jealousy. Penis envy is much the same sort of scam, isn't it?

It is night
I am happy
I am sad
It's early
I walk
I walk
I look in shop windows: I have seen them all
It is not night
I am not happy
I am not sad
It's late
I stand still
I stand still

Bonsoir Monsieur - are you coming with me?
It's not far — just round the corner
It's not much - you want it, don't you?

What do you want me to do?
It's not like that - I'll show you how -
You are weighing me down
I am dying — I am sick of you

I am hungry — I have to eat
I break off the corner of your mind and eat it
I am eating your mind - I am eating your body
come here — I want your mind
You - and you - you make love - yes - no

Come into my arms
I kiss your lips
you die
I want your body — I do not want your body
what does it matter?
Goodbye go away
It's night - its day - it's over.

THE PROSTITUTE

I am the rapist
I have been following you.
Walking behind you
creeping after you in the night.
Eating with you
getting into your bed
and I watch and watch until you are alone
And then I get you.

I am an animal.
Every woman who walks about alone
I wait...and I get her -
And everybody finds it funny - even
the police - they're my friends
they're into it too -
women - its your fault and I hate you for it

Machismo mickey mouse.
That old game is finished - we don't
want it any more -
no more fear - that walks down dark
streets to smile at screaming -
violence and fear - fear and violence
dead - gone -
come magic brother - come mystic sister
the age of the goddess is coming
we shall go in the sky to see the stars
come with me now - come

THE RAPIST

G: Yeah, well that whole Freudian thing is extraordinary. When you read current child abuse papers and find that incredible numbers of young girls are molested, and that Freud's diagnosis of fantasy and hysteria in women came from what really happened. But even now, if you mention such things you are pegged as aggressive, hysterical. I have often pondered why men are so unselfconsciously hostile to women. What do they fear?

S: It's fascinating that it is the most outrageous, impossible science fiction theme to try imagining some society not based in our conventions of sexes and roles. But how do you specifically deal with such problems?

G: The problem of actually working in Gong was like 27 people in a phone box. Never enough space and always headaches about solos, and not only that, being the only woman in the band sometimes it was just too much to resist all those striving male egos. So when the Gong left, my band started in a rather curious way. I'd made the *Mother* album, it had just come out, and I was going to do a promotion tour in England completely by myself, sitting in with various people, doing my own thing of poems as half hour guest spots with various units. The day before I left Spain there was a group of French musicians who said they'd like to come as a band and back me up. So there they were, suddenly a band, and working with them was really nice because I could put all my own ideas forward. It was how I wanted to do it, how I'd always visualized it, and no struggle about whether it should be this or long guitar solos or whatever. It was up to me.

S: So you became a leader.

G: Yes, which meant dealing with new sets of problems. I try to concentrate on the fact that what I am saying is not just me saying something that is a personal idea. I'm representing a far larger idea, and I hope transmitting through me certain forces which are much bigger than I am. And therefore there's no real question of ego involved, I'm just one representative and if I see a way to put something forward it's not to glorify myself but because I want to say things and have an effect on the world which will help. So we've had very few conflicts, really, though some men do find it hard to work under a woman, so to speak. But I've found there's also quite a lot of men who say they think women can do it quite well and if we go ahead and just do it, they'll be glad to come along with how we're doing it because it's going to be sort of different. So I've concentrated on musicians who do feel that way, in fact, and it's worked out quite well. It's finally a pooling of ideas in that sense. The *Mother* album was really a solo album. But then I started working with the band and out of that I started working with Harry Williamson, who is the guitarist, and out of that collaboration we've just recorded another album which will come out in June, of fairy tales, which is a very accessible and aesthetic form. The tales I chose were all about the development of the individual through a series of tests. Most fairy tales are that anyway. Harry wrote most of the music and we worked on the tales together and it was a really nice collaboration. Things get stronger that way.

S: I think that in the last few years of rock there has been considerable evolution in women's participation, since the problematic that focussed on Janis, very cunt-dominated and self-victimizing.

G: She was fantastic. She was not beautiful and she didn't pretend to be, she didn't pretend to be anything. She did what she wanted.

S: Yet that liberation could lead to our death wish as well.

GILLI SMYTH, MOTHER GONG



Linda Rultan



Linda Rultan

Henry Kahane



G: Well that stuff about radical differences between men and women is rubbish.

S: Yes, and then the punk movement seemed to let women in on their own terms. It was more full of interesting contradictions than anything else for awhile, especially for women. And out of that has come groups like the B52's, which has two women and three men and the whole band tends to rotate on their instruments, something like your musicians do in separate units like ZU Band and Mother Gong and New York Gong. There's a fluidity and an ease in the sense of a unit working together across any rigidity in distinctions like "singer", this or that player, front and side and center, girl or boy sex-object, that kind of thing. It's all sort of balanced in all of their functions in getting the job of the actual music done. I get the feeling that, if anywhere, the future resides in that kind of flexible combination and they look like they have a whole lot of fun on and off the stage.

G: It becomes a question of wanting to play because you are a musician, not because you're one particular thing, black or white or male or female, whatever. It is one of the hopeful signs but it doesn't go very far, does it? Because the music business is, well, one has to be really careful. You keep coming across conflicts all the time. I hate to say it, that it's male dominated, but it is, really.

S: Well I hate to say that what seemed so

women are the secret fire
Fire is the great regenerateur.

G: The thing is to be a part of the business: to use it without being dominated by it because you want audiences, and to put out records in a way that people can hear what you're saying. If you put yourself too far outside it you don't get heard and it all becomes essentially private, you know, self-indulgent. I'm fortunate, if you like, because there's the whole Gong audience. If I didn't have that, I know I'd be having a terrible struggle now, doing what I'm doing. It's really amazing having the Gong audience in all the cities we go to, a whole natural audience, so one has the feeling of giving out and getting it back. If I didn't have that it would just be a struggle and I don't know if I could persevere. But I want to go around changing people's lives. It's what I want to do. If you can say something or do something musically that will illuminate, and transport people out of their daily lives, so they have a more positive, more upward vision of their lives, that's fantastic and you ought to do that all the time.

S: It's interesting that you're starting to speak in a way that is like how people imagine theatre functioning.

G: Exactly, catharsis.

S: Or how Brecht thought theatre could act as

G: I just don't know. I really have no idea, I can't say. I wish I could. I hope it's opening up and opening up and I like helping people as much as I can because fighting that big consumer octopus can be really discouraging. The Gong has always been an enormous family that includes lots and lots of different groups. Now there is Henry Cow, National Health, Steve Hillage, a whole range of groups who've been involved one way or another. That's one practical way we've been helping people.

S: Do you see it going on now in North America especially?

G: Yes, absolutely. But where I'm going to live at the end of the tour I don't know. I have no place I can say is home. I mean, we're just on the road and what's going to happen and what we'll do next is an open question.

S: It seems there is a different relationship now between North America and what comes here from outside, especially Europe. This isn't the only spawning ground now, it's partly because there's big business in Europe, in Germany; it's broken the back in some ways of America's dominance as an originator or as the only game in the world as a market. This might be particularly true of progressive rock.

G: Well yes. But it has to do with ecology too. Which has again to do with expressing the feminine principle, with conserving the earth and

G: Right. We won't get a lot of money out of it or anything like that. It's just like a covered wagon trip is what it feel like.

S: And sometimes you end up in wilds like Toronto where you have not been very well covered.

G: It may be a bit too much of a wagon trip sometimes. But when you start branching out and it isn't all Gong freaks, you feel you've involved more and done more.

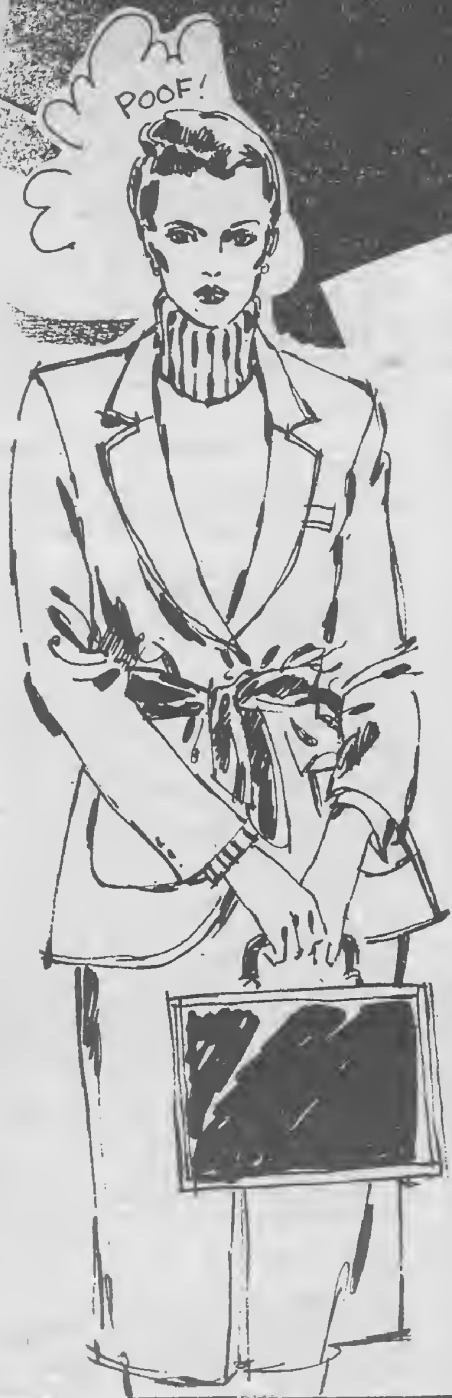
S: Are you thinking of this as a ground-breaking expedition that would continue and gradually build?

G: Absolutely. That's what we did in Europe: when Gong first started there weren't circuits for things that were out of the mainstream so we had to make them. There weren't circuits for things that were out of the mainstream so we had to make them. We made the circuits. Now Europe is probably the best place in the world for any original bands to play because there's these big circuits set up where you can go and play in every town for good money and good audiences and make your way. And it's not just a certain branch or kind or genre or ideology that's represented. And that's what we want to do here. That's what we're here for. In our tin helmets and spears and shields...

S: Actually, I wanted to ask you about your

Squeeze
Ladies

Photos: Miguel
Ladies: Annie
Rebbie
Loren
Daph







When John Cale and his new band were in Toronto to play three nights at the Edge in late March, SHADES had the chance to talk with him at the Waldorf Astoria. The power trio of interviewers was made up of Joel Dubin, Ron G., and George Dean Higton.

SHADES: How's the Edge working out for you?
CALE: Very well, it's a good club for sound. Limited for space but it doesn't affect the sound.
SHADES: What can you tell us about SPY RECORDS?

CALE: The first release on Spy will be Lester Bangs' single, and an EP by MODEL CITIZENS. It's my company now. It's my label. We have a lot of material recorded by other bands. Model Citizens was recorded recently and Lester's was recorded about a year and a half ago. He is sorely displeased with the progress of the release. The other night I mastered the record, so I think he's a little bit happier. He's got a good band down there in New York, he's written some solid songs. They did well at Max's, the record sounds hot, I wouldn't say that it's the singles' single, but it's a single and he sounds good on it. I just mixed it, he recorded it down at a studio on Green St. in New York. The sixteen track was really a problem so I remixed it. I produced Model Citizens.

SHADES: Are you going to release a lot of the other things you've worked on?

CALE: I think so. The problem is these other people that I had a falling out with...

SHADES: The POLES?

CALE: No. Well, partially. The Poles just walked away because we couldn't follow through...the record though was great, fine stuff. It took us a long time to sort out all of the litigation crap that was going on, and the people that got involved with us, I mean there was a lot of financing...

SHADES: Through WARTOKE?

CALE: Wartoke is a management company, that manages me. The Wartoke offices are also Spy and Cheap & Nasty offices. Cheap & Nasty is a distribution company that handles English new wave labels like ILLEGAL. So these gentlemen who I had a parting of the ways with decided they wanted the company, and I said they shouldn't be so conceited as to imagine that the policy of Spy Records was really created as CONDE NAST. So everything stopped for about nine months, it took a long time to put it back together.

SHADES: You've been doing production, working with other bands like the NECESSARIES. Can you give us any information about them or other groups you've been working with in New York?

CALE: What we had was the Necessaries and the SIC FUCKS, and we did an ep with BOB NEUWIRTH, which didn't come up to his expectations. Actually what we did was a single and he loved it and refused to sign a contract. I feel like I got screwed there.

SHADES: How about your work with NICO, is that going to continue?

CALE: Yes, Hopefully we'll get into the studio and make an LP or something. She has a lot of new songs. Did you go and see her the other night?

SHADES: I did catch her on Sunday night, I didn't get to your show till the second set, so I had Nico echoing and ringing and drifting through my head for about twenty four hours, when I came in and caught your first song...

CALE: Did you like Nico?

SHADES: Oh ya, I thought she was quite astounding, really, haunting and slightly unnerving immediately, but it was only a matter of relaxing into her wavelength, into her world, quite special, and very enjoyable.

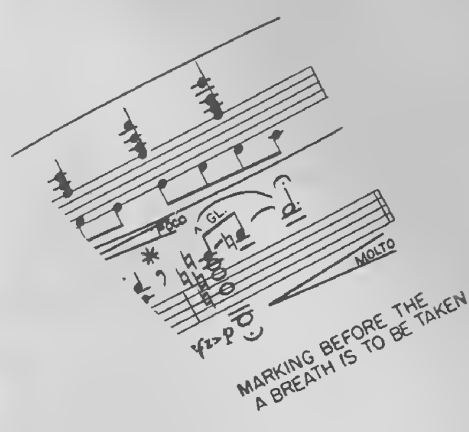
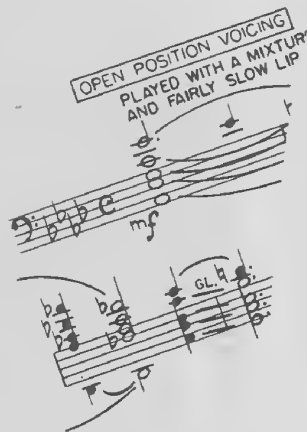
CALE: She learned from Kazan, She learned from Elia Kazan, she went to the Actor's Studio in New York. Kazan told her "once you decide on a style you stick to it, and if your style is slow you be slow and you be slow all the time, and you're never any different, you don't conduct your life any differently on or off."

SHADES: I thought it was really interesting after having that drift through my head, to walk in and catch your presentation of "Cowgirls". It seemed like a really logical extension after having heard her the night before. What brings about the image of Peruvian cowgirls crawling around on their bellies?

CALE: A couple of lines here and there. It's just lines.

SHADES: I like the structure of the song. Were you pleased with it last night?

CALE: Ya. It's a performing song, sometimes it works, sometimes it doesn't. We've been getting really lucky. The band's only three weeks old, we've been getting real lucky with this stuff. Sometimes we've made up songs in the dressing room, and then we go on and we do 'em and everybody falls apart, y'know, "holy shit, fucking



work". The songs are purely skeletal up to a point, and you go out there, and it would fall apart, and then it comes together, and then it falls apart. Cowgirls is kinda the guideline for it y'know, it has the chorus that keeps showing up, the texture of what everybody was playing, everybody would be listening and it would fall apart and then it would come back again. It would fall apart in the chorus where you'd expect that it would go...it would just like go.. and everybody'd listening and paying attention, and would lock right there. We did that in Buffalo, there's a song called Sabotage, and we did that. In the dressing room.

SHADES: Do you prefer improvisational situations?

CALE: Ya, absolutely. That was our modus operandi in the VELVET UNDERGROUND. Lou has great lyrical ability, making up words like nobody's business, and I'd come up with the riffs, you know, you stay over there and do your words and I'll stay over here and...

SHADES: Do you deal with him musically any longer?

CALE: No. He's been spending a long time trying to understand music. He's been making all these records, he's making another record and another record. Never mind the records, write some songs. You can put out the records later on, y'know. Put out a single and another single and when you feel like it, y'know, kill 'em! He's been trying to understand recording and understand music and going through these learning processes which I guess I can understand how important they are, y'know, to arrange songs. But I don't think I've forgotten the importance of that improvisational thing when you've got the right people together, the right, you milk it for the personalities of the people involved, it's not because you've got professional musicians, you get together, everybody knocks it...it's not that...

SHADES: Who are the personalities now?

CALE: In the band? Ya, it's three weeks old, we auditioned a bunch of different people. They're gonna be motherfuckers. I'm just scratching the surface really. The girls are just like, last night started getting closer, I don't mind them singing out of tune so much, if they don't put out if they're going to sing out of tune, well sing out of tune loud! Like, y'know, commit! I don't give a fuck about, you're not singing Wagner or Schoenberg, we're just doing a little diddy shit song, we're all up here to have fun, you'd better help out, otherwise, go home. I'm giving a lecture again.

SHADES: Do you listen to other music besides what you perform? Do you listen to particular regional or ethnic sounds?

CALE: Not really. I saw ROTTEN'S concert at the RAINBOW at Christmas in London. They played over the PA, they had a huge PA in there, it came blasting over, was BEEFHEART'S new album. I was just sitting there through these three reggae bands, up the ass, coming over, it was Beefheart, y'know, holy shit that's where it comes from. Fucking hell, hey Johnny, come on, own up, come on that's the guy. Ya, he had it a long time ago.

SHADES: And he does now?

CALE: Oh ya, I hope he does now cause I love him a lot. Apart from being an artist and an illustrator, he's one of the best illustrators in the world, one of the best in the world! You see this guy, he comes in here you give him a sheet of

paper and you ask him to draw something, what that guy does with a pen is like ridiculous. I saw the Christmas cards he used to send to guys at Warner Bros., works of art, beautiful illustrations. Drop of a hat.

SHADES: Have you seen him live?

CALE: Well, no I didn't. I opened for him on tour in France, but I didn't see him live. I met him in the foyer of the hotel and I said, "hey Don, are you still painting, mar? How about doing a little painting of the band or something". He'd given it up. He said, "are you kidding, after what they did to me in music?"

SHADES: Do you paint? Do you have any other artistic activities besides music?

CALE: Well, I'd like to be a short story writer but I ain't yet. Lou wants to be a novelist, satisfy myself with being a short story writer. If I could write 'em as well as Lou did with a gift...

SHADES: Would you publish stuff now?

CALE: Ya. So you're a writer, right, you're not a dj? You perform as well? Are you just having fun, or are you in it for the money?

SHADES: I'm into it for the debt right now.

CALE: Ya, aren't we all? I sometimes figure you can do really well y'know, and you can get more and more in debt. Then you turn it around to the people that you're in debt to, and you say, "shit, I thought it was understood that it was worth it in the first place. What are you getting on my fuckin' ass for? Go on: piss off, leave me alone and give me some more money before you go!" And then they give you some more money and walk away nodding their heads. And then you get more in debt, and they come back and...zzzt... (the sound of decapitation). That's the case isn't it? I mean you don't make any money in rock and roll, it's a cause. The people who do make the money are the ones who gave up the cause.

SHADES: Is rock and roll dancing resurging? Are clubs starting to open up a bit more, active audience participation? I don't really mean disco...

CALE: That took care of all the athleticism. Now there's only the cerebral left, apparently. All you've got is Brian Eno, Talking Heads, B-52's, Devo and all the other depersonalized bullshit that you can fucking want, with no passion for anything other than their minds. Anybody that can get fucked in their own minds can go and get fucked in their own minds in their hotel room. Well, why don't they just stay there and talk to themselves about it in a mirror and leave us all alone. We all just want to get laid, y'know? We're just nice normal people with normal urges, and like please do us a favour...would you agree with that?

SHADES: Well I like the idea of rock'n'roll dancing. I like the idea of rock'n' roll being motivational. You can go to a club and sit there and be really motivated, excited, stimulated...

CALE: But you're not doing shit.

SHADES: No, it's like let's move the tables out of the way and get up and shake ass...

CALE: If you've been missing it then I think you've been watching the wrong bands.

SHADES: I don't think I've been watching the wrong bands...

CALE: Well, I don't think the audience is at fault. Let's get straight about that, I don't think it's the audience's fault. It's your fuckin' problem if they don't get up and dance.



Mike Visser

SHADES: No, I'm talking about rock room environments.

CALE: I know what you talking about, and I'm telling you that if the band can talk to an audience, then the audience'll get up and do it. If it can't, they won't. It's not the audience's fault, it's the band. I'm just like touching bases here, y'know? It's my problem. I'm the one who didn't get them up off their fucking seats. I mean, rock dancing tends to do that, cause it exists in an environment of Islamic Disputry, that's a good phrase.

SHADES: Where did that one come from?

CALE: Iran.

SHADES: There is a crisis in Islam right now, there's a crisis in rock'n'roll.

CALE: That doesn't mean shit, what do you mean there is a crisis in Islam? There is no crisis in Islam. I mean, I don't know anything about it, tell me about it. I mean you are either Islamic or you are not, the crisis is what?

SHADES: Islamism is really expanding, its an expansive movement...

CALE: Since when? As long ago as the oil embargo it was expanding? No just when the oil embargo stopped that's when Islam started growing right? Everybody's worrying, they lost Iran, fuck. Didn't lose Iran, gained Russia. The Islamic population in Russia is growing faster than the white Russian population. It's the scariest fuckin' thing. The Russians have got it coming up their fucking ass in the back door. It's really amazing, Yugoslavia, Rumania. One of the disturbing things I heard about was the day that Ayatollah arrived in Iran, the squadron of MIG-23's flew over Iranian airspace without permission. They scrambled these nine AIR-15's that were in a U.S. Air Force base in Tabriz. The planes got up there and they just followed them out. When they got back down to the ground they found out that somebody had very carefully sabotaged the electronics for the firing devices in the AIR-15's. Someone had gotten in there and snipped the electronics off all of them. Who got on to a U.S. Air Force base and snipped the electronics?

SHADES: Spies.

CALE: Fifty per cent of the Iranian population are illiterate, fifty per cent, no reading and writing. All they do is use their ears, and they've already got such a strong infusion of rock'n'roll...

SHADES: Really, what bands are breaking in Iran?

CALE: A lot of ones that were doing something else when they were in Iran, but they were there. I knew a lot of people from England that went to Iran. There are some that go to Saudi Arabia, but it was all diddly-shit little stuff, don't get me wrong. Who ever played there it didn't matter so much what the radio was broadcasting, all that shit about getting women to wear veils, isn't gonna matter a bit. I mean you can dance just as well in veils as you can without them. Put the veil on, you can do anything you want, it's just fucking nomenclature. I mean shit, so you saw a piece of wood with a veil on, it makes it difficult to see, but...I think I got off the point. I forget where we started. Get Sandy to send down for some more beer.

SHADES: Maybe we should get back into some musical questions. You seem to have had a falling out with Eno and company, do you want to go into that?

CALE: It's not a falling out at all. I never talked to them about whatever you're talking about. I mean we never sat down and said we've got a problem here, let's figure it out.

SHADES: I didn't mean it that way, I meant more particularly you don't like what he's doing.

CALE: I never did! Y'know, I thought it was de-personalized, and I've told him that. In *Another Green World*, he wrote some songs that there, one beautiful song that he wrote there, "All of A Sudden He Knows" or something like that. He doesn't care about it that much. He has this de-personalized attitude towards art, and it doesn't matter. That actually enhances his position to develop that kind of emotion in art. He's an artist. He paints, and he creates sculptures. When he does that it really works in his favour. I really think he's cutting himself short though. He is selling himself short when he starts doing it in music. If you could put the two and two together, it'd be great, and he's very cautiously approaching that emotive aspect in music. I mean, get on with it, go on...whsst..jump out the window for a change, jump in the deep end of the pool.

SHADES: You say you've always felt that way, yet you've worked with him on a few of your albums.

CALE: He's fine. He's one of the few people that you can take into the studio, and you don't have to say anything to him. You just plug him into the board, press record and away he goes. He's very professional like that. I just am not sympathetic with this de-personalized music that is going on. I think it's far too much a product of cybernetics and a kind of mindlessness that unfortunately people too well relate to. I don't believe in mindlessness. I don't believe in extreme

JOHN CALE: SABOTAGE

Peter L. Noble



emotion either, appealing to somebody's sense of radar, sixth sense, rather than 'this is this, and that is that'. It isn't this is this. You look at it again, and you say, "wait a minute, there's a bit of a flaw in there." And you say, "well, I'm going to do this." Well, you go over there and you do that, you go there and you do it, and you don't end up doing what you started off to do. Human fallibility is the most important thing about people. I'm sure that from their point of view what they're trying to create is something where they set up a wall to wall situation where you're hemmed in to such a great degree that you will be forced to improvise. Then you'll break down the walls. What happens is the people that are doing it are not inspired enough. All they do is demonstrate their ability to stay within the walls, not break them down. I don't see any virtue in that.

went over there, and then the record company bought her out of her management contract. You're loading the deck once you've bought her out of it, but I mean she's a real: she's just got some balls. Years ago I'd have done something similar, but I believe in sticking to one thing once you've got it. I think from her point of view that she changed, got aligned. Goodbye. It's going to be Vegas pretty soon. She never made a statement anyway, I mean, I knew her a long time before she was Blondie. She was always destined to be a vehicle for commercial success. It was not somebody who was going to come out and make personal statements that, "I am here and now, and I'm telling you that..."

SHADES: It's not impossible to do that in a pop situation.

CALE: Thank GOD. Alright, then you analyse

they stopped it. Bam! They'd been handing out LSD to hookers in New York for weeks, months, in the safe houses. Did you see that special with Marx? Y'know, Marx and Marcetti the guys who wrote that...well Marx wrote a new book about the 'Mindbenders'. There was a clinic here in Toronto, used for the purposes of investigating mind based problems. The guy who brought this up, I mean he was a complete nutter, he was a major in the army. Read the book, but I'll tell you a story. There was this guy, he used to go into restaurants. They'd come up to him and say, "would you like to order something?" He'd take out his 45 calibre, stick it right up his nose and say, "did I ask you anything, cunt?" In front of everybody. Then he'd put it back in his jacket. This same guy was the one who organized the safe houses in New York where they got the hookers

tention to the television. They're out discoing. Oh, fuck the six o'clock news! Soon there's going to be no six o'clock news, just eleven o'clock news. Maybe an eight o'clock news for the people who stay up all night.

SHADES: Any artist, be it you, Eno, Blondie is by necessity a commercial artist. To have your music heard you must deal with the marketplace.

CALE: Yes, but we're not discussing our self. image anymore, we're discussing the realities of the situation. At some point the shit has gotta hit the fan. You can no longer have a Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young, and stack the deck that hard against everybody else. There is no joy in it, there is no sense of discovery. Isn't it part and parcel of the process, buying the record? Nobody goes to the

MARTHA AND THE MUFFINS

By Vanessa Shah

The requirements for a good bunch of muffins are ingredients that work well together, a mixture that can rise with given energy, crazy spices that give them that special uniqueness, garnished with color tone and individuality.

Only after years of experimentation and good hard work can the perfect ingredients be blended together to produce the best possible results.

Originating from a small room composed of cracked cement, and one eight by ten inch window, Martha and the Muffins have practiced, coordinated, and written the material that is slowly but surely bringing the band into the view of the public eye.

The band is made up of Carl Finkle on bass, Mark Gane on guitar, Tim Gane on drums, Andy Haas on sax, and the two Marthas Ladly and Johnson on vocals and keyboards.

Although the public tends to categorize them as New Wave, perhaps because of their lyrics, their costume or their name, they prefer not to be abandoned in that one class.

"We have no pretensions of being Punk or New Wave," said Carl.

"We like New Wave, but the Punk imagery just isn't what we're all about," said Mark when speaking of Punk's harsh reputation.

"Punk to me is something that happened in a brief period of time," said Martha Ladly. "In England they had a reason to turn to Punk, but in Toronto they didn't."

Both Marthas felt the same way about being in the band. They were there because that was what they wanted to do and not because they wanted it to have female content. They weren't there to stress a point, or prove their sex.

"We don't want to be two Blondies backed up by faceless people," said Martha Ladly. "The band is made up of six people and not just the two women up front."

"Some people find it refreshing to have female vocals," said Martha Johnson. But the whole band knows that, as Carl put it, "The out-put is very even between all band members."

The issue of women in rock has been tossed

about time and time again. The band stressed one point about this issue that summed up everything.

"Doing a piece on women in rock is like doing a piece about blacks in rock. At one time it was unusual, but now it's just not an issue," said Carl.

"I feel it is an entirely natural situation to have men and women in a band. Like Carl said, it's like doing a piece on Blacks in Music," said Martha Ladly. "There's nothing unusual about having women in a band. I think that we've gone right past the B-Girls. We don't do female oriented music. We're not like the Curse either, we don't solicit the same kinds of people at all."

"There are lots of reasons why women aren't in Rock n'Roll," said Mark. "But women in rock n' roll just isn't an issue with us."

In their press coverage to date the band has developed a reputation for being different, unusual, and abstract.

"People come to see us because we are more interesting than other bands," said Mark. "Our influences are so wide ranging. We sound like Martha and the Muffins and no one else."

"As far as bookings go, people usually approach us, we don't have to go out looking for them," said Martha Johnson.

They have played at the Colonial with the Diodes, OCA with the G-Rays and the Dishes, and at New York's famed Hurrah club.

"We started establishing ourselves after New York," said Martha Ladly. "We're not even interested in playing the Young Street Strip circuit.

We play the Edge a lot, and places like that."

Like most local bands, Martha and the Muffins also dream of those two things that will change their circuit from local, to national, to international.

"There are only two ways a band can exist: you have to tour, or record," said Martha Johnson.

After producing their first 45 themselves, on the Muffin Music label, they are hoping to have another release soon on a well known label.

They have produced tunes like Insect Love, Suburban Dream, and Paint by Number Heart. From the summer of 1977 to the summer of 1979 Martha and the Muffins, you are now complete. From a dingy grey room in downtown Toronto, to the local scene, who knows what's next?



Xerox by Martha Johnson from a photo by Jim Chambers

FOR UNFORGETTABLE STEAKS & SEAFOOD ..

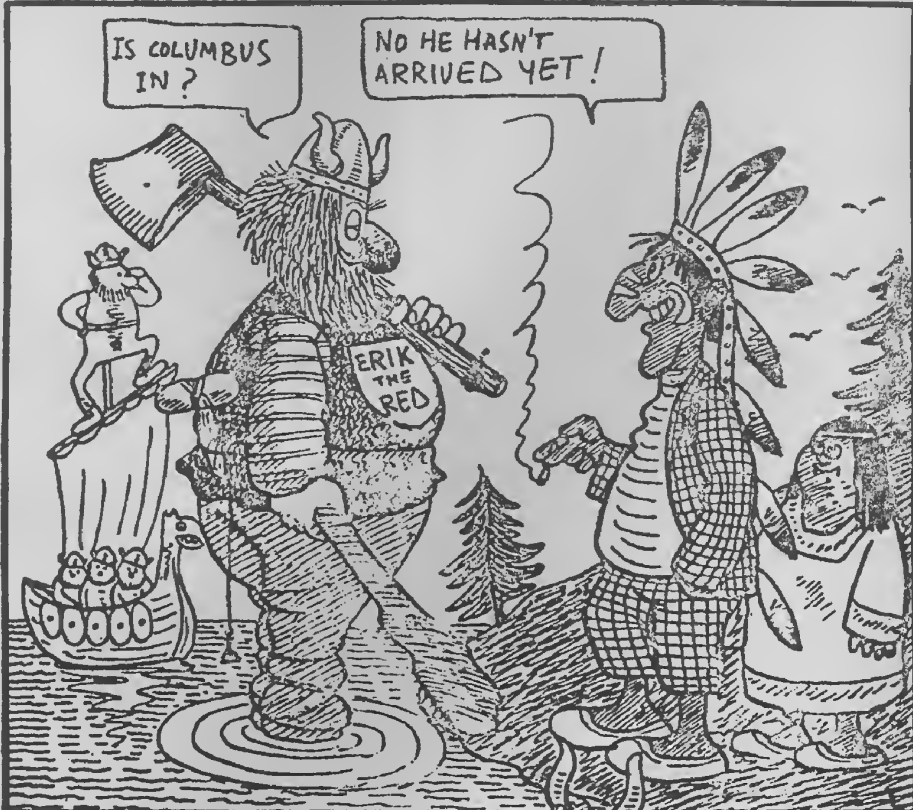


Hy's of Yorkville

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MAJOR CREDIT CARDS

SSSH! — SPREAD THE WORD

By Lola Michael

One night last September I went to the Isabella Hotel and had a really good evening. For those who saw BBC, a band the Curse had asked to do a back-up set for them, it was a night to enjoy and remember. It saw the end of an era in Toronto. BBC was a put together band, Buddy Hamilton (formerly of the Diodes), Chris Haight and Freddie Pompeii (of the Viletones), and Bent Rasmussen (from the G-Rays). But this was the birth of the Secrets, ultimately Chris, Freddie, Buddy and Mike Anderson, also of the Viletones.

As Buddy said, "It didn't start out as a real band. It started as a jam — a holiday from being in a real band. I had quit the Diodes so I was out of a band. We had been playing in rehearsal spaces over the past year or two and we would get a case of beer and some people together and play old Marc Bolan songs, Zoom songs and some original stuff."

The Secrets formed in a time of flux and change. The established Toronto punk bands were finding that what they had going for them was not enough. For the guys who make up the Secrets disillusionment with their current music scene came at much the same time.

"Probably myself more than anyone else was really drifting away from the band and in a sense I was just going to drift right out of it," explained Chris. "That's what was happening. But I had always kept in touch with ex-band members, doing jams on the side just for relief from the craziness that was happening." (Chris and Buddy had played together in Zoom). "It was nice to play to a civilised audience again. With the Viletones the audience would often break into a fight about five minutes after we had started playing. One night there were four people beating up on one guy and no-one was doing anything about it. I looked around and there was the Dog trying to get some photographers to take pictures of it. I just threw away my guitar and walked off in disgust, because that is not my idea of having a good time." The complete demise of the Viletones became inevitable. Mike pointed out that "The Viletones played only one more gig after that night at the Isabella. We were recording in the studio for Razor Records and Steve (Leckie, Nazi Dog) thought the contract was bad; that was shit. It was a very fair contract. We couldn't work things out with Steve. I joined the Secrets at their second gig at the Horseshoe."

Gary Cormier of the Horseshoe, now of the Edge, took a great interest in the band and booked them to support the B-52's. I was there and it was fun. I think that was what impressed me most about them initially, they were enjoying it, everyone was enjoying it. Micky Skin sang with the band and so did B.J. and the idea then was that it should be like an old R and B road show with different people joining them for sets: a party. For all of the band it came as something of a relief, a refreshing change from what had been going on before.

It was also strange. After all, the Viletones had had an established reputation. "We had all these groupies and instant recognition and I sort of lost 50% of my following at one time — I did regain it later and other people too" said Freddie. "I felt really bad about it but I felt it was meant to happen". And it certainly seems as if the Secrets were meant to come out. Buddy told me that they were talked into forming the band by other people. "We were not really serious about it at first". As Chris said, "we were jamming and playing a few times and then we were recording."

It seemed like an early album was on the way. Bomb Records, then riding high on their first releases, courted the Secrets with a lot of ideas which came to nothing, probably through lack of

What they want to do is becoming more clearly defined. They write the songs between them, tailored around Freddie's singing style. Their stage act is exciting and getting slick. They hope to release a 45 soon instead of the bootleg album they had planned when the Bomb tape became unavailable. They are seeking the path to the top, a path which seems somewhat elusive in the backwoods of the Canadian music industry. However, the Secrets have great hopes of their new management company, Teen Agency.

"We are exclusively managed by Teen Agency!" exclaimed Freddie. "I like the sound of that. Teen Agency are the only new direction agency in town and they place us in the venues we want to play rather than the accepted bar circuit that has been used and re-used for about 15 years now. Paul Kobak is trying to set up an alternative to that in North America, not just in Toronto. They are a really good agency to be with. It's a whole new path to the top and Paul is cutting his way through with a machete; something like Malcolm McLaren tried to do but it sort of backfired on him a bit."

So at the moment things look promising for the Secrets and I really hope that they do succeed in changing the pattern of things for Toronto bands: which has been to give this city a lot of good rock 'n' roll only to find that although it is gladly accepted by audiences it doesn't get them anywhere. The Secrets are evolving — they deserve a long life-span.



THE SECRETS ARE OUT



The Secrets at press time

Photos by Steve Rasmussen

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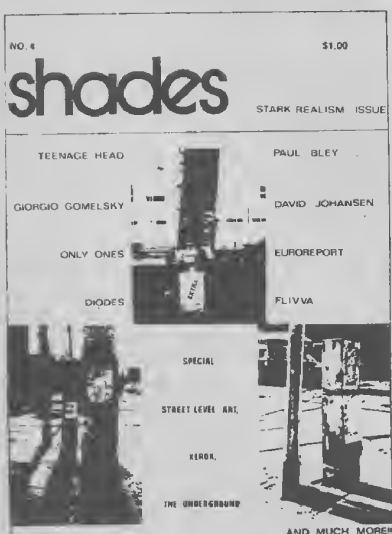
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SHADES Box 310 Station B
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By Ron G. And Max Mouse

Lene Lovich is a mystery even to Stiff Records who acquired the right to her tapes through a deal with Oval Productions.

According to Stiff, "She is stateless, of eastern European descent. She came to Britain after a chance meeting with guitarist Les Chappell in a Budapest nightclub. "He was returning from a profitable trip behind the Iron Curtain with a well-laden VW van, and struck by her potential, became her musical collaborator. Several governments are interested in her whereabouts."

Lovich's first red vinyl album for Stiff, which includes a version of Nick Lowe's "Tonight" and her own "Monkey Talk", was recorded with a lineup of Les Chappell on guitar, synthesizer and vocals; Jeff Smith on synthesizers; Nick Plytas from Roogalator and the Tom Robinson Band on keyboards; Ron Francois on bass and Bobbi Irwin on drums.

When the BE-STIFF 78 TOUR hit New York's Bottom Line last December Mr. G. had the opportunity to talk with 'the Queen of Stiff' at the penthouse offices of A.R.S.E. Management on West 57, across from Carnegie Hall.

RG: What would you like to mention regarding your mysterious background?

LL: Well I don't think we have to talk about anything, let's talk about the future.

RG: What can you tell me about today, tomorrow, the new year; are you going home for Christmas?

LL: Yes I am, I was going to stay over here for a little while, but I have to get a new band. I don't really want to, but I must. My whole involvement with Stiff is really quite new, the whole thing of me being allowed to play my own music is quite new. The thing is, I knew these people, mainly the bass player and the drummer and the keyboard player, but they're in another band, you see, and I just borrowed them. I have to get a new band when I go back because they want to go back to doing their own thing.

RG: What direction would you like to take things in?

LL: Basically the same line-up, except maybe two keyboard players. I want to have straight forward keyboards, and I also want to have synthesizers. It's not always easy to find a player who wants to do both, or who is versatile enough to do both.

RG: You co-operate with Les in your songwriting, what is his involvement in the writing?

LL: Mainly, the initial ideas come from me. I usually write the lyrics myself. Les is very good at putting things in sensible order, and once an idea is suggested he helps me to develop it, in a musical sense and arranging.

RG: What process do you experience in composing a tune?

LL: I never set out to do it, because I don't think I could if I sat down to write. I have to have some inspiration, just an idea. Normally ideas just come out of the blue. Nothing that I do is related to a direct incident in my life, although it may have evolved that way through a long process. See, I may have had some experience, it goes

through my mind and comes out again, so I never really name any names or state many facts, it's more of an emotional and atmospheric rather than factual type of music.

RG: What brought about, or what is the connotation of 'STATELESS'?

LL: It's not necessarily a political statement, but it's mainly categoryless, I suppose, and bagless. It relates to a mental statelessness rather than a political statelessness.

RG: How do you achieve the unique, eery, deep space dimension in your vocals?

LL: It goes back to the idea of creating an atmosphere really. The idea is that you don't have to say things in words to get the meaning across, you can often make a sound to create an atmosphere. I like to use my voice for sound, as an instrument. I like to tell stories, but I need to have effects to create an atmosphere for the story. The only electronic effects I use is echo. That's all the electronic effects that I use, the rest is just my natural voice.

RG: What about your saxophone?

LL: Well, I haven't been playing very long, by most musicians' standards, but, I'm not really a musician, I don't really like musicians.

RG: What's a musician?

LL: Well, a person utterly preoccupied with music, usually on an intellectual level. I really perform intuitively all the time; I just rely on my feel about things. It doesn't mean I wouldn't like to know more about it; I mean, I would like to have more information, how to read music and things like that. At the moment I am able just to use it when I need it.

RG: What inspires your saxophone playing?

LL: I think that it's one of the most sort of human type of instruments, it really becomes an extension of you. You stick it in your mouth. I mean, you really, like, plug into it, you know, physically. I don't know, I just have an affinity for it; everybody's got an affinity for some instrument. I did try to learn how to play the guitar, for a long time, and it was hard work; I never really enjoyed it much. And then I discovered the saxophone, and I found that I just related to it instantly.

RG: Do you ever play your saxophone through any amplification?

LL: I did at one time, but then I started working with other horns. When I did that it was just very weird to have, like the sax going through an amplifier, and I was working with say a trombone player, and he was going straight through the PA. We never got really close as far as the sound went. My sound was just so much more alienated to his, so we could never really get together. So I stopped using the electronics, I much prefer not to use them because I think the sax has got a nice enough sound the way it is.

RG: Do you play with your saxophone solo very often?

LL: It's very difficult, when you're up front telling a story, to go away for a second and play an instrument because it really feels to me like I'm doing that, like I'm breaking off from the story-telling and playing an instrument. I haven't really felt comfortable playing a lot of sax. I feel as though the story is suffering.

RG: When you're not making a stage presentation, when it's just you in solitude, do you wail away by yourself on the sax, or is the saxophone a performing instrument?

LL: I do play it, ya, but I like silence a lot too. I like silence. It used to scare me, silence, but I really appreciate it now, mainly because I hear a lot of sounds when I'm working, and when I'm out on the street. So when I'm in my room I like silence.

RG: What is your life other than this particular Route '78 Tour?

LL: This has been a really big part of my life, especially for the last six months or so. When I really just started writing songs with myself in mind, about six months ago. Really, for the last six months or so it's been my total preoccupation, writing songs, practicing, finding musicians and rehearsing; making records.

RG: Are you constantly renewed, having vitality brought into your music through these rapid-paced Stiff tours; different cities, venues, countries? Or do you feel that at this point you have already created a satchel of stories which you are in the process of delivering and honing?

LL: Ya, it's perhaps more the thing you were just talking about, although I never get bored with what I'm doing and in fact I do like to think that things are developing as I'm performing. Every time I do a performance, I feel like the audience is different, and I just feel like it's a different event. As far as the initial idea, I don't have very many initial ideas or impulses. Not a lot really; and if I do, I don't have much time to do anything about them. So what I think will happen is when I get back home things'll come back to me. Initial creative ideas will come back to me. Now I'm just sort of relating and changing to my experiences, y'know? There is a little bit of creation going on there; initial ideas are not, really. My brain is just storing them up. They're on the back shelves of the library. Other things are more up front and more important to me at the moment.

RG: Your single is "I Think We're Alone Now". How is that doing?

LL: From what I hear going around to the record stores in New York that sell Stiff records, it's doing very well.

RG: Are there any other blasts from the past which speak to you that we may hear from you?

LL: Probably not. I like that song a lot, but I don't think I'll be looking for old songs to do. I'm really excited about doing new things.

RG: By new things do you mean your own material, or interpretation of other writers?

LL: I'm concentrating my efforts on creating songs myself, but I really do enjoy hearing other people's songs, especially people who are writing songs today. Not necessarily with an ear for my own interpretation. I'm really no snob about doing other people's material or anything like that. I really like to hear other people's songs, it just depends whether I can find my way of doing them. If I could see my way of doing some one else's song, I'd like to do it.

RG: What's been the high point of your involvement in the musical world to date? Are there plateaus or special moments that stand out?

MONKEY TALK - LENE LOVICH



Photos by Adrian Bryan-Brown

LL: It's hard to say, really. I suppose the very first day that I signed up with Stiff. I just never thought that anybody would be interested in me. I never really thought I would get an opportunity like Stiff have given me.

RG: How did you and Stiff manage to stumble upon each other?

LL: Well, it was via Charlie Gillett. He's a dj in London, and he also writes books about popular music. It was through his show. I had been working on the continent, in Europe; I came back and I was really just looking for a job. Up till then I'd only been learning and using other people's bands to learn in, just playing.

At this point came a knock on the door, which I assumed to be the conclusion of our conversation, but instead, in came Max Mouse.

RG: Lene, let me introduce Max Mouse.

LL: Hello, Max; or should I say Mr. Mouse?

MM: No. Hello.

RG: We were talking about backgrounds and projected futures.

LL: Ya, it was through Charlie. On his show he had a little spot where anybody could ring up; if you're looking for a band, or if you're a musician looking for a job, or a band looking for musicians

for this other guy, and Charlie heard my voice. He seemed to have a lot of faith in what I was doing, and he asked did I write some songs. And I said I'd just started to write songs for me, y'know, and he heard them and he really liked them. Charlie used to manage a band called Kilburn & the Highroads, which, you probably know, was Ian Dury's old band, so he knows Dave Robinson, who runs Stiff records in England, and so he said, "I think I know where you should be," and he took me to see Dave. We'd just done this demo of "I Think We're Alone Now", and Dave just said, "I like it a lot; yes, like it a lot, let's not mess around, let's make an album". So we just did an LP. The whole thing was done in three weeks.

MM: Are you a big Tommy James fan?

LL: I remembered his singles, but I didn't know that one. Charlie always thought it would be a good song for a girl to do. He'd never really heard a girl singing it and thought it would be a nice change. It's been one of his favourite pop songs for a long time. I liked the song so I did it.

MM: Who did you start out doing the back up for?

LL: Oh, lots of people, no big name people. He was a singer who wrote songs, his name is Bobbi

LL: Do you think it's because I didn't speak very clearly?

MM: I couldn't figure it out. I found the, ah, Rachel Sweet, I found I could understand her words. I have no idea why. It could be your music was a bit more frenzied or something. It didn't bother me because I figured I would get it another time, maybe tonight.

LL: I'd hoped that you could hear the words, ya, it disturbs me if you can't hear the words. Maybe we don't just speak clear enough. Or maybe the sound, the balance, the voice wasn't up enough.

MM: Have you seen Lindsay Kemp at all?

LL: No, I haven't. I've only sort of been cutting across his path for so long, but we've never actually met. I'd like to meet him.

MM: I'm sure you'd enjoy the meeting if you did. He came to Toronto for almost, I would say two months, in a small theatre with his troupe. He put on two different shows. It was stunning. It was absolutely stunning. I'm sure it was the most interesting thing that happened in Toronto last year.

LL: Ya, I'd like to see them. I just really don't see you much; and I don't listen to you much.

LL: Ya. That's enough talkin' about me. I don't want to talk about me anymore.

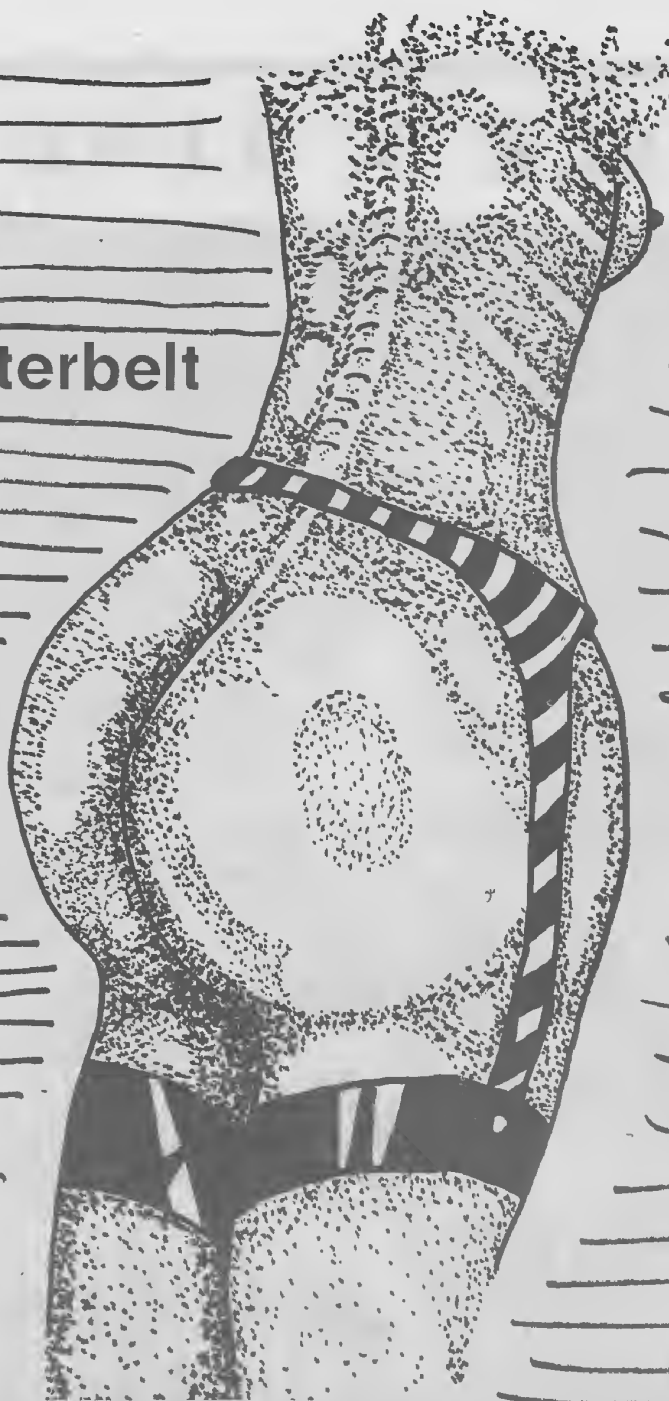
RG: That's fair enough. I love the texture of your voice, both in speech and in song. How's the working situation? Does it matter?

LL: It does working with the Stiff. Everybody seems to be really responsible for the job that they have to do. Everybody works efficiently right down the line to every person in the road crew. y'know, everybody works as efficiently as possible. It really makes your job as pleasant as it can be. There's nothing like having the feeling that everybody is really interested in what they're doing. It's wonderful to be in that position where people seem to care about their jobs, especially from the technicians and road crew. It's just such a relief, from, you know, slack attitudes I've discovered with other outfits.

MM: But you're going to be going out and working without them? Charlie told us he was hoping to...

LL: Ya, now that we've done this big show with everybody involved, then we're all going to be going out more or less on our own. We won't have maybe as big a road crew, we hope to have as efficient. I think it's important to have it in a

Our Lady of the Garterbelt



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Electra is draped in velvet and lace tonite. She strolls languidly under lights and the scarlet dress adheres to her queenly bum with a galvanic embrace. In her poses and attitudes this evening she will reveal nameless secrets, and decorate sex with garlands of black net. *Tantalize me my little libertine!* We can exorcize opprobrium while these few songs play and we watch each other.

She begins to unwrap the dress from her shoulders, exposing milky skin. From where I sit I catch glimpses of leg and stocking when the slit skin parts as she performs her undulating dance. It's a supple, fluid choreography; not reliant on the back beat of the jazzy music, but slithering, serpentine around it.

The dress falls away from her tits and little coral nipples smile. My heart is seized by tender spasm. Now she pushes the dress down over her hips where it's so tight, with a slow delicate undulation. Then, with a flourish she tosses it away.

Electra is breathtaking in her garterbelt! In this raiment a woman is imparted an almost mystical sexual presence; sacrificial underwear. An exceptionally beautiful woman is rendered heartbreaking.

There is a pause between songs.

With an expression of professional deliberation, *Electra* drags a wooden chair to centre stage. On her face is a look of serene insouciance as she poses and tugs gently at the suspenders. One stocking is unhooked demurely and rolled down and up again and, finally, tranquilly peeled off.

She stands and, with her stockinged leg perched on the chair, does it again. At last she kneels on the chair back to front, perfect bum resting on her heels, and twirls the belt slowly, letting the suspenders dangle as she moves to the music, then lets the garter drop.

The music fades. The lights go down. The sun comes up. The world goes round.

Hail *Electra*, full of grace. *Delice* art thou among women.

Our Lady of the Garterbelt

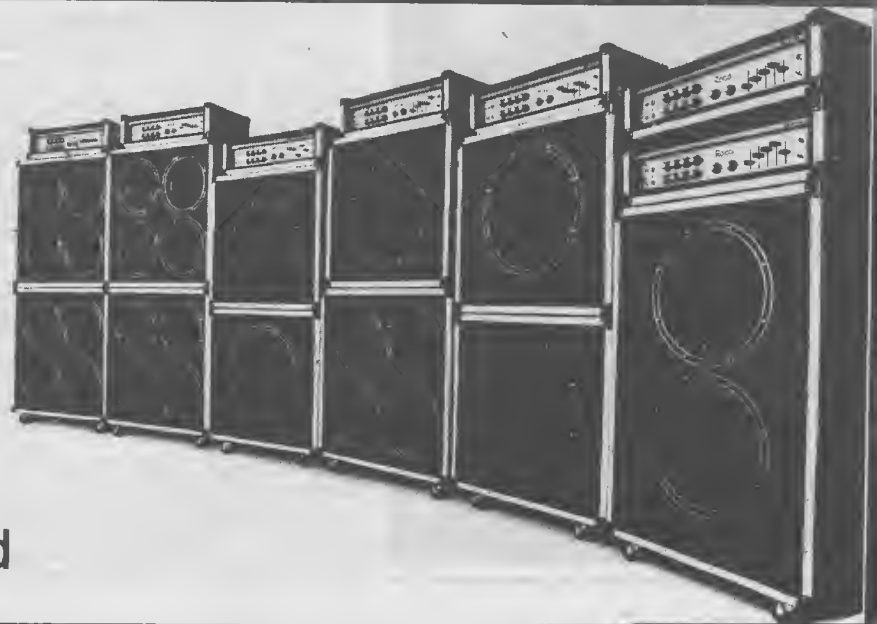
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WHO /S THIS MAX MOUSE ANYWAY?

I have set down how the action of the drugs had partially stripped off the recent layers of memory. It had achieved a parallel result much more efficiently on the moral plane. The toil of countless generations of evolution had been undone in a month. We still preserved, to a certain extent, the conventions of decency; but we knew that we did so only from apeline cunning.

We had reverted to the gorilla. No action of violence and lust but seemed a necessary outlet for our energies!







Gail Beyek 79



Pere Ubu is notoriously hard to talk about. They aren't difficult to talk to. Whether that solution does much about the initial problem is either debatable or quite irrelevant.

You could say (as Carola Dibble did in the Village Voice of May 7/79) that "Ubu's secret is the combination of arty ideas with great riffs and hooks, but even if that were simple, it wouldn't begin to suggest the astonishing proliferation and felicity of pattern in the music", or that it is "complexly evocative", even "a contrapuntal or polyphonic construct" in which it is "the ensemble that matters" in "the convincing imitation of randomness in the use of randomlike sounds tucked into deep but tactfully casual structures."

On the other hand you might want to agree with one of your editors who thought it was simply what was on top connecting with what was at bottom and everything that came between: a vocalist who often adds some quirky percussion, strong (every third song rather reggae) rhythms, spare, inventive synthesizer and lead guitar switching off with the bass about midway through every set.

It is - at least - two, two bands in one. So perhaps you'd rather just listen to them: on their two albums (*The Modern Dance*, *Dub Housing*) or three singles rereleased as the EP *Datapanik in the Year Zero*, or here, between sets at The Edge on May 2, talking to Paul Wilson, Sheila Wawanash and the rest of the dressing room.

SHADES: Okay, let's start at wherever. Pere Ubu. Carefully chosen, of course?

DAVID THOMAS (lead singer): Not that carefully.

S: Alfred Jarry, pataphysics...

DT: The usual way we go about things, it was just a spur of the moment decision.

S: Does Baby Huey figure into Pere Ubu at all?

DT: Baby Huey!?! No. No, I don't...

S: Why not comic strips?

DT: I don't have anything against them, I just don't read 'em.

TOM HERMAN (guitar, sometimes bass): I like comic strips, what do you want to know about comic strips?

S: I was just wondering. Seemed to have as much to do with anything as anything else. Pataphysics is just an idea, too: You can always revise it.

TH: I don't like Mr. Natural either.

DT: I don't know, you know, it's just, you know. The reasons for choosing it are lofty and not just...

TH: T is a very unsubtle person.

DT: T is blunt

TH: I'm a much more intellectual person. I mean look at this shirt I've got on.

DT: I'm not going to talk about why we chose the name, you know. You'll find that you won't talk back.

S: Okay, how about why you chose your rhythms?

DT: Well, we didn't choose them.

S: They chose you?

DT: Yeah, I mean, you know, that's just what we do.

S: Your album title acknowledged the influence of Dub, of Jamaican rhythms. It's possible, isn't it?

TH: The Americans reworded it.

DT: Well, the reason for choosing the wording of that was because of the housing problem.

TH: Housing in Baltimore.

S: I thought that you were from Akron. Or Cleveland. I get confused.

TH: Not Akron, Cleveland. If you went there

DT: you would not be confused.

S: I've been there. That's why I thought I was confused.

DT: We have a negligible audience there.

Someone: Drugs, then.

DT: Drugs make me smart (this is pronounced like Laurel to Hardy).



Photos by Peter L. Noble

S: Did you choose the garbage bag motif in your backdrop?

DT: What garbage bag motif? That must be the club.

TH: We don't really care about props or whatever.

S: It seemed appropriate, what holds in disintegration these days. Not unlike your music.

DT: We don't plan anything.

TH: If they want to set something up, that's fine, you know. If they give us a spot light set-up, that's fine, if they just turn out the house lights, that's fine.

DT: All that other stuff has nothing to do with music, you know. It's just entertainment, the show is itself.

S: How long have you guys been playing together?

DT: This particular group, since July '76. Three of us have played together since October '75. Three to four years.

S: Where are we now? 1984? Two thousand and one? (David Thomas and Paul Wilson talk about the Plastic People of Prague, singing in a band, getting deported, sending material into the East).

S: The image I kept getting in your performance was the mirror. The mirror, all the time.

DT: The mirror of what?

S: Just the mirror. The fact that you guys are so close to what is acceptable, and yet so far away from it that it's like looking into a mirror and you can't touch it, you can't define it, you can't grasp it but it's right there in front of you. I saw you a few months ago at the Horseshoe, and I didn't feel you were quite as together as you were tonight.

DT: We keep getting better.

S: Well, of course. But what's so fantastic about you is you're so close, you know, to where people's sensibilities are and yet so far away. Maybe ahead. Leading.

DT: Of course. (Business concerning the sale of some records is negotiated: there are 5,000 pressed, at a price of \$1.05. When they're gone they're gone).

DT: Plus all these sleeves are hand pasted together by me. All 5,000 of them, 'cause people should know what it's like.

S: That's the difference between music and product.

DT: I only pasted them together because it was cheaper.

S: But to get back to my paean of praise. Your vocals are what hold the band together, as far as I'm concerned. It's a combination of vocals and rhythms.

DT: Everyone is in charge of what they do. All the way down the line, you know, tuning and mixing.

S: Well, but this is a band, the first band I've heard, where the vocals mean something in terms of music.

DT: I consider the vocals more as an instrument. The lyrics are basically the vocal but I don't try for a lot of separation, even recording. You know, the words are the skeleton, notes are the lasers.

S: But I couldn't understand a word and it didn't matter at all.

DT: That's what I say! That's exactly my point. (The subject leaps)

DT: Dub is a number of ideas. The particular representation I have of Dub Housing is...I don't want to go into it, know what I mean? I don't like explaining stuff. Whatever anyone sees in it is just as valid as what I might say. It's just: I don't like it when people present all this stuff for my consideration, you know, an interpretation.

S: Did you play England about a year and a half ago?

DT: About a year ago, and did a second tour last fall. We played the Marquis and then the Roundhouse.

S: What was the reaction in England?

DT: Much better than over here. Yeah, yeah, no comparison. The second time we played a couple of concerts. We also played some caves. In America, over here, everybody sits down. In England people get into it. People are oriented towards getting much more involved with music there. Every way. You know, I think people look deeper into it than over here. It's a lot of reasons, the media orientation, everything is oriented to what is new over there. People have less money to spend and they spend it with more feeling and they're much more involved. They feel more personal commitment.

S: Do you have any debts to Captain Beefheart? He seems an unacknowledged presence in music that's happening right now.

DT: Well, I mean, I like him, you know. I buy his records. I'm more influenced by attitudes than riffs or something. When you see someone approaching something from an interesting standpoint, it's just a matter of excitement. When you see someone do something cool it might motivate to do something cooler. Competition. *Trout Mask Replica* was the first album I ever bought. Before that time I was listening to MOR radio.

But I don't feel really influenced. I mean, I'm influenced by everything. You can't really say that it's this or it's that.

S: It's what's in the air.

DT: I've been influenced by a bird.

S: I want to know about the future. I could care less about the past. I've been there. What about the generation that grew up on Talking Heads, Devo, Dead Boys, whoever?

DT: That's fifteen years away.

TH: Did you see that Rolling Stone thing about Captain Beefheart that said he was unique, he wouldn't influence anyone? And then Devo comes out and admits that they stole from Beefheart and other bands. Quinn Martin productions.

S: Of course, TV, where else is it?

Someone: Ten minutes.

This (not very) commercial break ends, the show goes on, members of the audience leave, finally, agreeing they'd just heard their favorite band. If they were not much the wiser for that, they weren't alone in it either: the loudly demanded encore was another tribute to funky, intense radical art/pop-culturoid enthusiasms. For the moment, it would do just fine all around.

THE FOXX IN ULTRAVOX!

INTERVIEW WITH JOHN FOXX
by P.L. Noble

SHADES I've always found it to be rather surprising, y'know, all of the bitchiness and bitterness Ultravox have had to put up with, in England that is. What the hell furnishes this ridiculous attitude?

JOHN There's a whole movement in the British press against what they consider to be more complicated rock music. It's unfortunate because the paper takes a stance in order to sell so many copies. If they weren't such lazy reporters, they would try to find out where we actually came from. They'll find out we had much more street credibility than most of the bands around today. We were around a long time before they were, with no money. We played in London for nothing because there was no such scene back then. We performed in the squats around Regent's Park, little clubs and very small places for friends. We even played at the Royal College of Art for no money. We actually lived on six pounds a week for about two years.

SHADES I don't find you as 'like just another singer with a pop band, yet, on the other hand, I'm not suggesting you're a 'knight in armor type' either. What was your education like?

JOHN I went to art school for quite a few years, ever since I left 'real' school. In fact, most every band is from that type of environment, whether they admit it or not. I know for sure that most of the new bands have one or two members who are from art school. That was another part of the thing, they said there was a stream of 'art school rock', which is very silly to say because the remaining bands in London, every single one of them, came from some kind of art school. Even Johnny Rotten comes from art school. I'm rather proud of that in fact. It occurs because of the education that art school actually represents. It's a place where people go who don't fit in with anything else. They can't get jobs and they don't want to be a part of that system. You go to art school and play around with all the facilities that are available because it's a very liberal education, a marvelous education to say the least.

SHADES What are some of your prime interests within the real of art?

JOHN I've worked with a lot of video tapes in the past. I was, and still am a painter, but I like to use a lot of photographic and mechanical things such as silkscreen, photo litho, color xerox and straight drawing. Some of them are abstract while others remain figurative. You'd have to see them really, it's very difficult to describe them.

I've got two exhibitions at the moment, one in Munich and the other in Hamburg. The gallery in Hamburg is called the Kiz Gallery. The first one is an exposition of people in music who paint, not just rock'n'roll. The other one in Munich is going to be just a group of friends and myself, one of whom's doing a book of Eno's lyrics. The man who's doing it went to college with me. We were in the same class together. His name is Russell Mills and the book is quite marvelous actually.

SHADES What kind of work will be on display?

JOHN The things that'll be on display will be mainly color xerox and drawings. The xerox work comes from magazine collages, then I tend to draw certain images, and, in turn, construct collages of the drawings and mix the whole thing up. Actually, I've sold quite a few pieces of work, partly to keep alive when Ultravox first came together. I sold things to people like milk advertising executives and film directors. It was very funny and rather bizzare (laughter). I'll never stop doing any of my work 'coz I've been doing it since I was seven years old. In fact, it's probably more important to me, or just as important as the music is. I consider it part of the same thing really. I don't like to separate them because it's just part of the same body of work.

SHADES One of the things I admire about Ultravox are your intriguing lyrics, a rather far cry from the crock of muck that's hitting the airwaves these days.

JOHN I get very bored with song lyrics that you hear on the radio. There are lots of ways of writing. I like to keep the things very visual. The things I like best, the songs and the words that is, are the ones that tend to evoke a powerful feeling. You weren't conscious of reading a book, yet, what it did in fact, was create a cinematic effect inside you...an internal cinematic effect. I always like to approach a song as a soundtrack almost, so a musical theme can be erected.

I just keep a diary of little things that I see around in the streets, y'know, little dramas that happen all the time in cafes, very common things. Sometimes it depends on the way I'm feeling. I might write a mood piece about how the light changes in a room when I'm sitting within the quietness. The song *Quiet Man* is very important at the moment, to me, anyway. I think I must have found it necessary to make that kind of figure, although it's based on many people that I know. It's an opposite point of view from the way rock'n'roll works. Most people who are in this media seek, very strongly, to advertise themselves. They're involved in a consumer industry and they must sell the product which their company puts out. I hate that to some extent. Perhaps that makes me perverse for being involved in it. I just don't fancy the mode of operation at the moment.

The figures which interest me are the people who had a very strong philosophy and a set of ethics, and went through life without finding it necessary to convince others about their beliefs, convert or even to advertise themselves.

SHADES It's very difficult to exist within the atrociousness that the rock'n'roll business breeds. I know that you've got your own feelings, but, for some reason I feel the British Press don't want to take the time to find out what you're all about...

JOHN They think we're aloof because we won't speak to them very much. It's not a matter of aloofness, it's just the opposite really. It's probably some form of shyness. I don't agree with the way they sell papers, so I don't see why I should be involved in that, but, at the same time I wouldn't moralize enough to go out and say that, although I've just said it. I'm not interested in preaching, I'll leave that to someone else. Most political or moralistic preaching is nonsense...And it's done, sadly it's done as a marketing stance and I don't want to be involved in that either because I think it's immoral. I'd rather be quiet about it.

SHADES I think many of the new groups are adapting your audio style. It's only a personal belief of mine, although I may be dead wrong.

JOHN I like to think ideas are everybody's property otherwise everything would be static. Fortunately, people can assimilate anything, use it from their own angle, then it becomes something different. It's like the Beatles taking Chuck Berry or the Stones taking Muddy Waters. I mean, they stole completely from them, but, they managed to acknowledge the source and give it life in order to interest others with it. They also found a new thing for themselves as well. That's important because that's what civilization's all about...it's evolution. What Ultravox have done I think, hopefully, we've worked with the new machinery, y'know, the new technology that's been available, while still being aware of the old things as well.

SHADES Is Ultravox a part of the commercial industry?

JOHN I don't consider Ultravox to be a part of any mainstream. I'd say we were involved within a stream of modern music. We just do what we feel is appropriate. For example, I don't even know what a word like punk means. I guess it's a journalistic term. Very few people have ever called themselves punks, and they were the ones that came after the whole fashion boom was instituted by the press. The record business, as well as being a consumer industry, is part of the



Peter L. Noble

fashion industry as well. The mid '70's punk craze was started off by a man who owned a fashion boutique. I mean, you've got to understand that. You've got to look at how it's marketed, and believe me, it is marketed. Like all things that are well marketed, it happened to touch on something that young people did feel, which is what rock'n'roll is all about...which is separating one generation from another and exploiting the gap. It was done very successfully because young people have got to find an identity of their own which is different from their elders. I'm not interested in that. The choice for me is either integrate or disintegrate. I'd rather integrate things. I'm not really interested in generation gaps because I think it's an illusion.

SHADES When Ultravox first started out, was there a concept in mind?

JOHN Well, Ultravox is a concept, yeah, we designed it very carefully, but, it was a design for living, not for marketing. We wanted to design a life of our own. We didn't have anything when we started...no money, few prospects, but we felt we could do it very well. For example, some friends of mine came over to America and wanted me to come over as well, and I said I wouldn't until I was working here. At that point, maybe I would feel as if I were part of the place. I didn't want to be a tourist or anything like that. I mean, my life is work. I don't mean that in a dull sense because I think work is the most exciting thing one can do.

SHADES Things must have been very difficult when you first started out. The early days can be a bitch, if you know what I mean.

JOHN When we started off, it was considered very unhip to do anything complex. Everything had to be simple and angry. Hmmm...and we weren't simple and angry. We were, originally, and we started off, but we passed that stage rather quickly before everybody else did. I guess you could say that we were out of phase with what was going on. We didn't have much respect for the bands that were out at that time because we thought they were conservatives. That's why the whole thing died in London so quickly. It's all dead now, all that side of it anyway.

Many of those bands erected their own conventions and stayed within them. As a result they became very repetitive. After an audience had seen them once or twice, they found out that they didn't have very much to say. Sometimes we deliberately did things against that sort of 'head-banging' mold of rock'n'roll. We'd do things which were opposite to what was considered fashionable.

Sometimes we'd start off the set with *I Want To Be A Machine* with just an acoustic guitar and myself on vocals. That was considered outrageous by the standards during that particular period of time. We'd finish off with *My Sex* which was also outrageous because you're expected to come rushing on stage, a thousand miles per hour, shout and do all these other silly things. We never thought you had to make a loud noise to make a strong statement.

SHADES You've given us wonderful records like *Ultravox!*, *Ha! Ha! Ha!*, and *Systems of Romance*... I just hope the band sticks together

for at least another three LP's. It would be rather tragic if Ultravox decided to call it a day at this stage of the game.

JOHN We won't fizzle out! I mean, we may stop and do something else or change our mode of operation so that it doesn't involve certain things that we don't enjoy...which is what we do all the time...we adjust it.

As individuals, we're all different as well. We have different ideas in regards to what we consider to be appropriate. We have this idea of loyalty between ourselves. I mean, if someone had a bad period, we didn't like the idea of just shuffling them out and replacing them.

SHADES Well, what do you have to say about your ex-guitarist Stevie Shears?

JOHN ...uh...well...he was just unable to work with us anymore. He was ill most of the time, which meant we had to cancel tours and recording and so forth. Musically, he wasn't as good as our new guitarist Robin Simon and, believe me, we've known Robin for quite a long time.

We respect, or at least we try to respect each other's point of view. I mean, we never wanted to be like the four mopeheads or clones, because that's not real. There are different influences within the group. Robin likes hard rock very much indeed. In some ways that's a conflict with what I like because I prefer fairly thoughtful things. I also like the weight of rock'n'roll as well, but used in a different way. Billie Currie's classically trained. He's very much in love with music and harmony. On the other hand, our bassist Chris Cross enjoys pop music...disco and Gary Glitter. Chris is the kind of musician who really gets off on the rhythm.

SHADES I'm really not trying to bullshit you, but, I honestly feel that your writing and Ultravox's music is so damned significant, that it hurts. Can you tell me what your secret formula is?

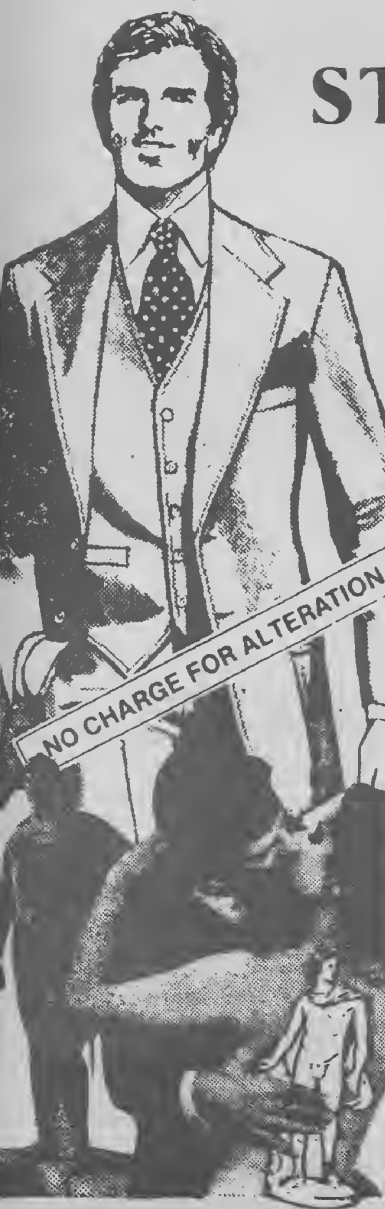
JOHN At the moment we're very involved in synthetics and rhythmic sounds. We've obviously got a drum machine and a few other sequences. We've just become interested in making songs that are very simple and elegant...by elegant I don't mean fussy, I mean simple and stripped down, that's the definition of elegance for me. We're very mechanical but also very human as well. I like the melodies and the feel of a song to be human. One of our newest songs *He's A Liquid* is a perfect vehicle which illustrates this feeling to its fullest degree.

*Special Note

About seven weeks after this interview was conducted, Ultravox returned from their first North American tour...it could have been their last tour ever...anywhere.

Foxx has parted company with the band with no reasons given. The remaining members of the band admitted that Foxx's attitude towards the band was becoming rather 'negative'. During their last tour, the band felt Foxx was becoming 'increasingly difficult' to work with; however, they are currently looking for a new vocalist to replace him.

Ultravox lives on...but this time the Foxx will be gone. C'est dommage.



STOP PRESS

By ALASDAIR RUSSELL

I clipped some song lyrics from a recent issue of Hit Parader magazine to see whether they'd anything in common. They all dealt with some form of relationship. Especially prevalent was that of self with lover — meeting and parting. The second type was that of self with self — self awareness, exploration. Thirdly was self with other — inanimate object, humorous situation, odd incident.

Obviously, the songs that spark most people's interest are those whose central theme revolves around intimate relationship. One's irrefutable aloneness finds poignant expression in the longing for/spurning of a lover. Such dialogue diffuses the concern from ourselves, projecting it outward onto another. Thus a fictitious woman, for example, takes the blame for the author's own lack of self acceptance/love.

Throughout rock's reign, the same poor woman has served as lyrical dartboard to a horde of frustrated songwriters. Some mistreat her, others don't need her, some are terrified, but all manage to vent their personal, often obscure, neuroses for the price of a pen.

Heaven knows the royalties she could command!

Perhaps some budding rockophile will produce a new Rocky Horror Show; one where this persecuted persona breaks the shackles of image-bondage and proceeds to dismember her horrified mentors. Popular music/media today is rife with such reference; to the woman who "done me wrong", and the dude who's just "gotta be travellin' on". For further information, contact the Marshall Tucker School of Hard Knocks & Quick Getaways Inc. Rock dames are not far behind their denimed compadres. Rondstat's "Poor, Poor Pitiful Me", must be the epitome of this country rock schmaltz — currently the vogue in Southern California, i.e. the world at large.

How boring. How dull.

How ridiculous to limit soul metaphor to such inane and threadbare imagery? Surely 79's L.A. cowboy can dig a bit deeper into the ol' well of imagination and come up with some truly ingenious, witty — even challenging song lyrics?



Gasp!

How about an upbeat tune that goes, "My baby left me and I feel alright!". Why not? It'd be a welcome change from the pseudo-blues stance taken by the majority of commercial songwriters. We all experience pain/pleasure, yes, but not necessarily in accord with the standards set by popular media.

Who's to say you won't feel wonderful when your mate abandons you for some exotic cult?

On the other hand, when you're supposedly "in love", don't you have twinges of doubt, feelings of emptiness — even as you hold your dreamboat close? Write about that, songwriters. Tell us of the loneliness no lover can ease. Tell us of the joy when they finally leave.

Remind us of our basic selfishness — and please, throw away the negative connotations surrounding the word, "selfish". Tell us to be guilt-free about looking out for our own best interests. Sing about survival — soul survival when inspiration wears thin. Cut thru years of media hype/movie conditioning and tell us it's marvellous to live alone, to be fulfilled alone, to create alone.

Romantic image for 79:

"Darling, if you leave me now, I'll surely DYE MY HAIR ORANGE, GO OUT ON THE TOWN AND HAVE A BALL!" Or, "We're in love but I've got my eye on every woman I see!" The possibilities are limited only by your imagination. Make your own honest lyrics!

See them as important valid statements — give yourself instant credibility! Refuse to be intimidated by the popular press fantasy machine running, as it does, on a predictable and dated format: i.e. woman as ultimately responsible for man's corruption - separation as being painful to the point of suicide - man with no responsibility, rambling on with macho stance intact. See/hear the hype-refuse to believe it - replace existing attitudes with your own reality - STOP PRESS.

Collage by SW

"The Fruits of Summer"



FASHION: TORONTO ON STAGES

By Angie Baldassare

Alegna Stark (raving) drags me to STAGES every weekend, the ludicrous gay club where fashionable children of the late seventies wait in used tanned smiles and new Cartier watches to transform themselves into Disco Babies.

Alegna: OCCUPATION: Compulsive Disco Habitue.

AGE: Between 19 and the Valium of the Dolls. ADDRESS: 20 Hazelton

CONCEIVED: By a promiscuous Jewish-Yugoslav black mother during a 1950's gangbang at a Foreign Convention, making Alegna an International Eclectic

AMBITION: Instant and constant gratification.

Saturday night she gets out of a cab wearing a Halston Ultrasuede jacket, her classic look, with silver pants and silver glasses, on spiked red leopard heels from Fiorucci's. Alegna is never trendy, she actually wallows in it. She carries under her arm current issues of *The Soho News*, *Interview*, *Italian Vogue* and *Reader's Digest* (yes, *Reader's Digest* went so far out that it's come right in).

Once inside the club, though, we lose each other as she releases her thighs on the dance floor and I simply observe. What first arouses my curious interest is the outrageousness and sensationalism of outfits that — bear in mind — are not "new" since they've been seen and worn in second hand clothing stores as well as in punk and new wave zones for at least 14-16 months now.

"It's always been like that", says Pat Roy, an owner of **COURAGE MY LOVE**, a second hand shop in Kensington. "Fashion designers just look around to see what's happening with people who are artists, musicians and take most of their ideas from their art."

It's old news that designers hung around street-level shops and imported ideas into high fashion from the "low" and exotic sub-cultures. Yet today it seems the chi-chi crowd is actually shopping there for themselves.

"People, though, still really buy Calvin Klein and other name brands," comments Roy, "because their peers do. The name is still important for them and not what they're wearing. The only actual change is that people are really searching more to find what suits them and they wear what they really want to wear. And I think that's great because they wear what suits them as a person, what mood or period suits them and what's really comfortable for them. That to me is what fashion should be."

"As far as the fashion itself is concerned it's been in for a long time. It's just changed a bit in the sense that the '60's hippies were wearing these clothes in a different way while in the '70's it's become much trimmer, more '50's."

Standing against a pillar in *Stages*, I watch this geek who is walking around in an undertaker's suit with a piss-yellow hat, one of those cushions that farts, a tie that stands up very straight when you press a button, black wraparound Orbison shades and a Groucho Marx mask. He stops right in front of me. He stares. I tell him he looks like a stupid fucking moron. He smiles and keeps staring. Then he tells me he likes to be an individual so he dresses "different."

"For the last three or four years you had these over-bagged looks, Annie Hall and whatever", explains Leighton Barrett of **EXCEL** on Queen St. E., "and people were blending into the sidewalk. Today they're starting to flaunt their bodies, thanks also to the effect of New Wave. New Wave is a strong statement. It's gutsy and people have the desire to be more gutsy today. It's a revival of that fervor of the '60's, people want to jump around and be stared at. And they want to stare back."

"I'm not dealing, though, with Capri pants, salmon pinks and turquoises smoked together, that's too anachronistic, almost as bad as people running around looking like Paris, 1940. I think that what's going on is definitely going into a new direction. There's more of a feminine, more of a feline feeling to things. Not every woman can go out with a skin-tight catsuit and gloves, though, that's not for everybody."

"I like doing sensational things, generally really tight and loose. For example, today you can go one of three ways: you can go really fitted, y'know the suit jackets and all, or you can go really sloppy and loose (but I think we've had enough of that) or you can go really tight, skin-tight. I don't personally think the skintight bit will last forever, although there are plenty of women who want to wear these clothes and can't because they just don't have every asset that goes with a totally tight outfit. There are certain portions of the anatomy people can just get away with. I don't know that many women with unshapely calves, I don't know that many women without gorgeous arms and no matter how big they are they all have beautiful shoulders and necklines. I work with these areas very well and I know it sounds crass, but I have to work around people's problems."

I walk around the hurly-burly of colours and bodies to get away from the geek and head for the washrooms, saluting the usuals. I find my Yugoslavian friend, Bobby, trying vainly to contour his mouth with lipstick. I examine attire that's intriguingly personal and free: a worn out black leather jacket, black T-shirt, black denims and ditto for sneakers.

"I used to be into the name-brand outfits and suit bits when I hung around at **DINKLES**," he tells me while I help him with the makeup, "but I started feeling trapped, I started looking like 20 other guys in the place. Then my brother started showing me photos of himself in the early '60's where he looked much sharper than I did. Plus the sound, the music was changing. I began looking around at other people, new wavers or punks as some call them, and I liked that. I felt nostalgic towards the '60's and started borrowing my brother's old clothes and wearing what I wan-

ted, what I felt. Unfortunately people at clubs like *Dinkles* could not understand it. Hostility started to build."

"Here in Toronto people are frightened of New Wave" explains John Steinberg, owner and creator of **THE RAINBOW ROOM**, "but what they don't understand is that what's happened with New Wave is what's making the fashion for tomorrow. They won't accept it because it's new, it's young, and people don't realize that people who walk around with these outrageous designs are going to be the designers of tomorrow. I was in London last week and there punk is accepted in clubs because it's part of fashion. Here you're put outside by the way you dress. Like myself, I've worn outrageous clothes for 15-16 years, I've always bought second hand clothes and always been into this sort of thing. There's two lines of

thought: fashion and anti-fashion. Punk is anti-fashion but anti-fashion is also fashion."

NEW ROSE is located on Queen Street East at Parliament, one of the first Toronto punk stores and definitely the most original and interesting fashion store in town today. Here the fusion of sound and fashion is an asset. "When I first opened the place in August 77 it was more of a clubhouse than a store," explains Margarita Passion, New Rose's originator. "There was drinking everyday, beer cases everywhere and it was more or less a Viletones hangout."

"Then I started carrying clothing that I thought was relevant to the scene, the same with records, magazines and the buttons I sell, only because I liked those styles and they suited the music. The other fashion, Klein etc., doesn't really affect us because it's mostly the kids that shop here, not the



artsy crowd. Kids that like to relate to the style and the sound, where there exists sort of a rebellious stance which appeals to them. The store is very much street-level but I do get some of the Yorkville crowd who throw a bunch of clothes on the counter without even looking at price tags. In the after-hour discos everybody is dressing punk now, wearing post-punk and punk fashions, new wave fashions or whatever the hell they call them, I just think it looks sharp, that's why I wear it and sell it."

Walking back into the crowd I see another acquaintance named Johnny Johnny sports black T-shirt and chains, black leather pants and leopard-skin shoes ("got them made for 90 dollars") but the sensational part is his hair. The back of his head is shaved like a spiral, punk at its most outrageous. Ever heard of Lou Reed? No? How about the Sex Pistols? Ever been to New Rose? Where do you shop then? "Boston"

"Sophisticated punk. That's all it is", explains John Steinberg, "or sophisticated New Wave. Young people are expressing themselves again, they want to be different and that's only possible in clubs like *Stages*. You see, *Stages* is in a league of its own in the sense that there you can dress in an individual sort of way without being stared at. At other clubs people would start worrying about you. It's not necessarily just the gay community that are bold enough to dress like this but there are certain lifestyles and jobs, like artists, hairdressers, musicians, who tend to become the so-called "week-end punks," which make places like Bemelman's and *Stages* interesting."

"At the Rainbow Room we try to appeal to as many people as possible, but people are terrified to come in here because they believe that we do the most terrifying, outrageous work. Meanwhile we have some of the straightest clients around."

"Fashion looks more individual but there's obviously people who are controlling this whole feeling: the designers. A lot of the stuff that happened at the Paris and Italian collections were bright colors and all, but people who want to be fashion conscious in, maybe, our wage bracket can't do it that way. So they get a white shirt and dye it and this is where the creativity comes in. Individuality is being forced on them because they can't buy the Dior's and the Fiorucci's, but they want to be in fashion. People do it all themselves now."

I decide to leave the aromatic chambers of the powder-room and take to my observation post on a barrel near the dance floor. I watch Steve and Dennis (inseparable as usual) flaunt by; extremely feminine and very stoned. Steve's clad in black leather trousers and a tight red halter while Dennis also sports leather but with a leopard-skin top. Most striking is overly dark and sensuous makeup: a trend I've seen used by many men at *Stages* who are wholly hetero or bisexual. It's a transvestitism not usually picked up by gays themselves. For some reason I think of gypsies.

"The Rocky Horror Picture Show is a big influence," John Steinberg enlightens me again "a big influence on the, uh, let's call them weekend gays because to be bisexual is to be fashionable. And a lot of people who are gay are frightened to go too feminine because their lover still wants them to pertain to a certain part of the male image. There's kind of a sexual liberation feeling going on."

Sexual Liberation: gays are no longer trying to hide their gayness, women are putting more of their bodies out on display. Everyone's decadent, bad, uninhibited, wrecked, unafraid of what people might say.

"I think dance and music have got a lot to do with this," John continues. "The type of music that is put out is a free expression, and to really express yourself with dancing the freer you are, the better. So I suppose the lack of clothing or the looseness of clothing and the design is really made for people who want to express themselves on the dancefloor. Discos are very hot, and also at night you can lead sort of a dual life if you want. It's slightly dark, a slight bit of mysteriousness there, a woman can get into a situation where she can do something with her hair, her clothes and her look that is totally different from what she is during the day. That must change her and make her a different person on the dancefloor at least for that moment."

"In a situation where there's good music and they know they are free, especially a gay disco like *Stages*, women know they will not be hassled and they can dance with their friend, the same way I can dance with a male friend and not be necessarily gay, and you get that free expression and nobody feels inhibited. When you get rid of that (inhibition) on a dance floor, certain parts of it must creep into your everyday life as well. Maybe they include it in their life bit by bit until someone tells them that they can't come to work like that. But if they're in control and keep in these directions they themselves become a little bit freer, which I think is one of the greatest achievements of life."

I look at my watch: 3:45 AM and I feel drained, lethargic. I walk towards the dance-floor and watch the hundred people dancing become one sweating, half-dressed body moving to the driving heartbeat. Lights fuck the floor in rhythm. Christ, they are beautiful, everyone, even Alegna. I remember Alegna telling me once that she would like to see a society where they would shoot all the ugly people if they didn't get it together.

I waited to dance. An inexplicable feeling hit my left inner thigh and worked itself up as I watched Alegna move onto the dance-floor like a snake in heat, no partner, like a jungle goddess being offered up to the juke box god in a stew-pot of sweat to DANCE! DANCE! DANCE!

Even though the raging music continued to blaze and hundreds of voices were raised, I started to feel a quiet, like that in the eye of a storm, the quiet before a disaster. I went home to a book and my new Roxy Music album.



AN ENIGMA:

THE GIRL WHO STRIPS

TO SAVE MEN'S SOULS

*Metro Hotline — 533-9131 or 533-7863 — Sunday, April 29, 1979. (Script directions: the voice is breathy, affecting something like latter-day Peter Lorrie male impersonation. High pitches will be indicated in CAPS, panting in this way**).*

Hi. Thank you for calling the home of LIVE* nude girls and sex movies. Playing this week, from Monday, April 23 to Sunday, April 29, Carry on Emmanuel and ***SS Girls. PLUS two LUSCIOUS, NAKED * girls on our stage. Uhm. OH*** This week's feature is KELLIE EVERTS, the lady who strips for GOD Oh** OH*** Please come. COME. The Metro Theatre is fast becoming the hottest spot in North America for nude entertainment. We are located at 677 Bloor Street West, four blocks west of Bathurst. Take the TTC to the Christie subway. Doors open at twelve noon, continuous from 12:30 PM, Sunday from 1:30 PM. UHM** when it comes to girls the Metro Theatre is tops. Uh** please come. OH** save your soul and COME. Save your Soul.

Photos by Shorty Henry

Kellie's crusade: Wait. I have something to give you. I'd like to give you articles and pictures. This one's from Washington, DC. about the time I preached in front of the White House. This is an article in the Washington Post, one of the most prestigious papers in the world and they gave me as much space as the Rolling Stones. It says Kellie Everts dances to save men's souls. It's supernatural. Crazy. It says, they quote me, that I like to exhibit my body and watch the men go crazy. (The men go crazy) Not to make them sin, she cautioned, for she is very, very serious about the avoidance of lust. She says, some men feel lust but what can I do about that? She doesn't smoke, doesn't drink and avoids sex. She avoids sex - but - I can't talk about that. The blessed Virgin Mary told me not to talk about my private life. It says I rewarded my assistant, Angie Baby, alias Honeysuckle Divine, with a fuchsia smile. I was wearing fuchsia lipstick so they called it a fuchsia smile. These reporters are very clever, the way they write, you know. When I'm finished dancing I have lipstick all over myself. You know, when I talked to the spirits, yes, I talked with Marilyn who is a Saint, and Rudolf Valentino. I asked him if he was a homosexual and he said that he was above sex. But I talked to Elvis Presley's mother, who said her boy wouldn't have liked me too much because I am too virtuous. Her boy liked girls he could have a good time with, she said. I have other articles for you at the front, from when I was first in Playboy, in 1968, when I won the first Miss Nude World contest, and when I was in Playboy lifting weights in an article called Humping Iron. The weights were so heavy the bikini broke and fell off. Oh, by the way, I have pictures, beautiful, sexy pictures outside. To sell. Okay, 'bye, 'bye. God bless you.

SHADES talks to Kellie, after the show: They kicked us out of the Royal York, but we gave out our pieces of paper right on the corner.

S: Did you talk to Trudeau, or get a response?

K: He made mention that some of his supporters were out there passing out brochures, or something to that effect. And he had to meet them, so he was cutting his speech short. He also said something about Trudeaumania. But we got kicked out. Believe me, if he'd come to meet me the whole world would have known. Then I had to come to work. I couldn't wait. Then somebody told me he was staying at my hotel and I thought I might sneak into his room.

S: It's a shame God didn't tell Trudeau.

K: He did tell him. God told me to show my love, I do not have to do it in physical terms. You know, like Love, just pure love. So next week we'll have 5,000 more of these sheets and I'll give them out after shows with the rest of my publicity. The lord told me that he will be Prime Minister for the rest of his life. God wants us to voice our love and support. It's not good to lackadaisically say well, who cares, or he's going to win. If he's good, then we have to work for him.



There's a lot of opportunity just waiting for you



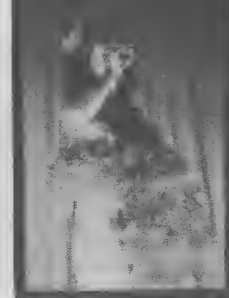
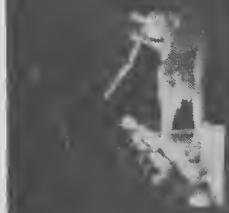
Kellie's crusade, last show for the night: You better bring me some pictures back or I'm going to bite one of your balls. You know, the devil tried to prevent me from coming to Toronto. He gave me nightmares for a week because he knew I came here to save men's souls and he doesn't want to see me save souls. But he couldn't stop me because the power of God is stronger than the power of the devil. And I think the lord told me five people have been saved this week. I'm going to be here another week so we'll see what happens, see if I can get any more, if I can catch any more fish in my net. So make sure you come back.

Wait a minute, what magazine did you say you were from? SHAKE? SHADE? What magazine is that? As long as it isn't HUSTLER or something like that.

You're wearing a cross. That's the first thing I saw, before I saw you.

Why are you feeling your breast? God bless you. Hope to see you again.

Oh, I'm staying another week for the main reason that I'm campaigning for Prime Minister Trudeau. (Yeah! Boo! He should be hung). We started two days ago at the place he was giving a speech. We blew their minds over there. We gave out a thousand pieces of paper with information why God wants Trudeau in the government. Because he's a man of God who reads the Bible to his children every Sunday and because of his natural qualities and because of his devotion to God, the man should be in that office. And the lord told me he's going to be the Prime Minister for the rest of his life. (He should be tarred and feathered). You always want the leader to be the scapegoat, for your problems. I understand if it wasn't for him, you'd have even worse problems.



One night with you is what I'm prayin' for

Girls, you know the kind, the kind that's in the wrong place At the wrong time

"THIS IS NOT THE WAY WE LIVE, IT'S OUR LIVELIHOOD"

TAKING IT OFF AND GETTING ON WITH ORGANIZATION: AN INTERVIEW WITH MARY JOHNSON, CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF BURLESQUE ENTERTAINERS

By Sheila Wawanash

Mary Johnson: As far as where stripping is at today, there's so many different opinions it's hard to say that one is right and that's where it's happening. There's no point of reference really, no distance that we can get. Except that I work at it, mainly in town. The problems are different out on the road. The basic problem for girls around town is that it is on more than one level getting sleazier. All the time.

Shades: On what levels?

M: The audiences seem to want to see more and more meat and more and more spreads and more & more crap.

S: Floor work and flash?

M: Floorwork and flash, and they take a little pin spot, you know, and they put it on your crotch and consider that a show.

S: Do you think that's largely because of the impact of changing images in the popular press? In the Playboy era there was a mammary fetish, and there was a lot of silicone and double twirls. And that's now become like a classic thing you can see a generation gap in, now that Penthouse and cunt fixation have actually influenced styles and expectations.

M: Well things have become so lenient that people lump any kind of nude body or portrayal of a nude body into one category. In fact there's a difference: there's art, there's erotic entertainment, there's pornography, there's pornography through pictures, or movies, or articles. It's a lot more than taste that's the question. It's the law.

S: Like the infamous Hamilton bylaw passed last week, where all erotic publications have to be covered up. Except for their titles, like little windows. Or women's eyes peeking over the veil.

M: That's Ontario.

S: But it actually gets as grungy as Times Square.

M: As grungy or more grungy. What really bothers me, though, is the number of times you hear politicians expressing concern about unemployment for youth and women and it seems the more you hear about that and the more you look around, the more you realize they're not really concerned at all. If they were concerned they'd be trying to help some of the girls and dancers like we have in our organization to get in a position where they're working legally and they're not exploited and they're paid properly and get some benefits and club owners don't get away with all the crap. The attorney-generals in various departments, the police and club owners have been cooperating in effectively blocking our efforts to get cases into the courts and then the girls take the blunt end of that stick, not getting paid, getting hassled. Having to lay on their backs for some sleazy old man in a bar.

S: What kind of court cases have you been trying?

M: Things like when they make it a condition of employment that you take off your G-string. And there's another place where the man, if he likes a girl,

S: The old casting couch?

M: A little more than that. Girls can get fired after they've already gotten the job. All of a sudden you find these two little eyes peering out from behind the water heater, in your dressing room. Even if you're experienced in situations like that and can handle it, know how to talk to these guys and let them know they're barking up the wrong tree, it's still a pain in the ass. It's a drag, it's a strain, and working conditions don't get any better as a result of it. All of a sudden nothing's any fun anymore. There's no relaxing, no doing a really good job because you feel good. Of course, that's not illegal, to make someone feel bad. It's sort of unfortunate that it isn't. But when you try to make somebody sleep with you and put their job over their head, that's extortion. And that's quite illegal. Though people don't seem very interested in doing a whole lot about it. Then there's the present attempt to pass a bylaw to padlock the places that have nudity. It sounds like it might protect the girls: if you don't have nudity you won't have some problems that go on around it. But they haven't taken the time to define nudity yet.

S: And it probably means, in fact, unemployment.

M: Exactly. And that's for five to seven hundred in Ontario alone. We'll just lose our jobs entirely.

S: Is there a problem with the fact that there's been progressive closing down from the body rubs to the topless places, so there's a sudden influx into your trade?

M: Well I can't moralize about that. I mean, society generally deals with it on the level of whether they want that kind of activity. It overrides the question of jobs. Then the girls, myself included, turn around and say that we're entertainers. We're doing legitimate jobs and we want to be treated that way. At the same time there are some moral things in question here because we don't like to be victimized and exploited: I mean, the thing with a pin spot on your cunt, for Christ's sake. You're a whole entertainer when you're up there, you're not just one part of your body floating in space.

S: At some point is it useful to draw distinctions between categories like dancers, exotic dancers, some other form like paid advertisement for hookers?

M: Well those things are inflicted on us from outside. I think we can change that. That's one of the things this Association is all about. Education and legal protection.

S: So you'll be able to do your job as you define it?

M: Right, without pressure from moral or immoral forces. And here I am, making the same kind of value judgement, you know.

S: Well I think you're defining your location as being caught in a pincer, damned if you do and damned if you don't and out of a job either way.

M: That's why it's important we have the Association and do something about it. It's not just because of the enforcement of some nudity laws recently, it's not just because of any one thing. It's a combination of all of those things so we feel it's imperative to gain respect and legitimize our profession. Or else we won't have a profession. The directions it's going in now are against our wishes and also against the wishes of the authorities, from one side of the coin. From the other side, the authorities are going so gung ho on it that they are missing the problems. They'd rather wipe out than clean up. What is this, Germany?

S: Well I keep asking that question again: is life a cabaret, old friend? And whose cabaret? Who controls the liquor laws?

M: Frank Drea has been pretty helpful about a proposal to clean up the dressing rooms and make the stages secure, at a proper distance and all that. The problem for us has come most from McMurtry, though I wouldn't say it's malicious. Probably something like voter appeal. The only problem we've had with Frank Drea came because we also talked with Margaret Campbell, who is fantastic. They don't seem to like us trying to get all the help that we can, you know, it gets really territorial. But there's a difference between those people who are politically active like Margaret Campbell, and those who are politically ambitious. Some of them don't seem to understand that they can't clean up Yonge Street by busting every woman in town. Which is what they have attempted to do. If they want to clean up they should go after pimps, stiffen some of their laws about soliciting. Maybe you can argue that hooking went on in the body rub parlours. Of course, we all know that's true. And as soon as the G-strings came off that led to a lot of other connotations, too. If we just wanted to do that, we'd make six times as much doing porn films. It's an easier off, you don't have to go back every night. Or if we wanted to lay down and spread, we could make more on that. Or do private shows, where we wouldn't have any problems as long as we didn't charge admissions.

S: So one of your main concerns is maintaining the state of the art?

M: Yeah. We consider ourselves entertainers and professionals and we'd like to keep that element in our work. We don't want to be reduced to a little number where we're all laying on our backs on a stage. I don't really know why audiences want that so much. In one sense, the pressure is to be more phony. In the other, they seem to want us to be more accessible. To see more. And they really get off on it, it seems, when they see a show where the girl isn't really that talented.

S: Would you say it's like a new wave of contempt for women? That the actual need is to see women who can't get it on, who don't have real ability, talent or training?

M: That could very well be. Because even when girls are really good dancers, there's more applause if you do something gross. Things that have been an accident in my show, I get applause for and I go "my God! What's going on here"? As soon as the G-string comes off, your audience has a whole different outlook towards your show. They can all be away in whatever little world that you've made for them, on the streets of Paris in 1935, whatever, you can do anything you want to do, and you take off your G-string and all of a sudden it's not the same. The whole mystique is gone, the situation you've made doesn't matter. It's not like an artistic change. They all of a sudden remember why they paid at the door. They may let you do whatever you want with your show in the meantime. But when it comes down to the fact there's a naked body up there, it's...gone. The change is just like that, you can feel it when you're doing it and that's where you can get the little play to tease them with the G-string. Very often when you start to lose your audience one way or another, you can just play with any part of your clothing. It doesn't work so well at the beginning of your show, cause they know there's still stuff underneath it. But as soon as it gets down to basics you can do just about whatever you want to, until you've taken it off. Once you've taken it off, then you've potentially lost them again in an artistic sense and the only thing that will keep them through the rest of your time is looking at that part of your body. And it seems that when girls are really awkward, the audience gets rowdier, asks for more to do with sex. I suppose that's understandable if they're not being entertained.

S: So being an entertainer is your way of dealing with that kind of crowding? You really need your skill and your professionalism.

M: And I think a lot of us develop that over a course of time in direct reaction to what people do demand, to what we have to overcome. You learn to handle it. Then it changes from bar to bar. Not so much from class of men. There's a few places, very few that will get off on a good show and turn their backs on a bad show whether there is a body or not. It's encouraging that there are those few. But there's 256 clubs in Toronto alone with some form of exotic dancing.

S: What clubs do you like?

M: There is zip at the moment I really enjoy. I like Bassel's, the agent is good there. There's a lot of places I wouldn't work.

S: Do you get the feeling we may be entering another stage of intense politicization for women?

M: I get the feeling that we might make progress if we hit hard at this point. Maybe that's just because I'm growing up. But it encompasses much more than women's rights. It's not the time to separate problems. For one thing, there are some male strippers.

S: Well strippers are generally women who have had to deal with real basics in sex roles and stereotypes, learn to deal with behavior that stems from assuming you're "bad". But being too sexy is dangerous to your well-being as people.

M: We've had to deal with the way things are. Our point is that things can change.

S: Would that enable you to be more genuinely and freely erotic?

M: It could, yes. Because if we had the proper protection and proper facilities and the proper distance was maintained through space rather than the style of the act, a lot of the problems would be eliminated. Along with making sure dancers get out of the place and home safely.

S: There's a bylaw about safe passage for women employees, after midnight. They're supposed to add cabfare on to your pay.

M: That's hard to enforce. And a lot of shows in the suburbs especially let us out well before midnight. But last bus is at seven out in the boondocks, with warehouses and empty fields all around you and a lot of drunks who have just seen your show.

S: The suburbs are dangerous anytime. It's all thicker than water out there. How specifically are you going about the job of forming a union, though? What are your objectives?

M: Well, what we've talked about: upgrading. We haven't even started yet on getting really good contracts and proper bargaining rights. We have applied to be a direct chartered local of the Canadian Labour Congress and we haven't heard back from them yet. We can't be a trade labour union at this point because we don't have a direct employer-employee relationship, we have a third party now, the agent.

S: So you're all basically freelance?

M: Right, and that's one of the main reasons we need a union. At present we can't fight at all as a unit and don't have much bargaining power or protection from the Labour Board.

S: And it's hard to make decisions collectively.

M: Right. Not working for the common good, but for an individual's good, which is often against the common good. We can't get any of those things yet. But I think we might change some things just in our struggle to get them because we are very different than the other entertainment mediums. I think it would take a very long time for society to think about us as one thinks about actors equity or the musicians union.

S: Well the musicians union is a direct branch of the American union. Will you be affiliated with anything in the States? Is there anything there? Or are you thinking of local grassroots organization?

M: We're thinking of a national committee and organization. There is a union in New York. It seems to be a pretty strange union, though. Instead of trying to be a regular trade labour union, people there are paying over \$1,000 a year in dues and it's organized through the agencies and the management mainly and it's policed by the Teamsters.

S: They're being pimped. Seems like a model one could rethink.

M: Yeahs. One of the first ideas we had was to go with the Teamsters until we thought more

about it. The American union has one sort of power. I spoke to the Teamsters here to see if we could get some monetary assistance and the guy insinuated it sure would be nice, they could be affiliated with us and the girls could come do their parties...We had to tell them it wasn't quite what we had in mind. It came down to not being able to do business with them, simple as that.

Must have been fun...

M: They gave us lunch at the Barrister's room at the Hotel Toronto. It wasn't a complete loss. It was nice, actually.

S: You are planning a benefit, I think you told me.

M: The benefit. Yes, that will probably be at the Titania now. We'll likely go with a Friday night, early in July. They've got lights and we've got sound donated, we've got a full cast, two groups - a couple of bands, Flivva's one of them - dancers. We still have to decide whether to use taped music for the dancers or a big band that can read score. The place is an old burlesque house, seats 1200, seems like exactly the place for us to go. That's another kind of organization, though, doing publicity, ticket sales. I have enough trouble just getting our bi-monthly meetings together and trying to get all the people assembled for court cases.

S: How many are coming to meetings? How long have they been going on?

M: Since February, and there's been a pretty good turn-out. Practically everybody has signed up who has been coming to every meeting. And everyone who has been in the group has paid their dues.

S: How much are dues?

M: They're ten dollars a month and practically every meeting there's some new people and they've all signed up. Every meeting our membership goes up. It stands now at about 100.

S: Out of how many? What is the possible constituency?

M: Maybe 300 in Toronto and 5-700 in Ontario. But there could be more than I think.

S: Have there been any national feelers? Are there groups in Vancouver, Ottawa, Montreal?

M: Montreal, yes. There's some girls that are forming there but we haven't managed to get in touch with them yet. We haven't been in operation that long and everyone says to concentrate efforts first on Toronto and get it as strong as we can in the city and then start going out. I've got to tell you the truth, though. Some of these girls aren't the best at doing the work. They'd like to pay their ten bucks and have all the benefits there and handed to them. They'd like to have someone step in. As you see, the office is here in my place, it's taking a lot of my time, I've had a lot of weeks off work, it's taken a lot of energy and I've had to stick my neck out a lot.

S: Well the pressures are directly on them.

M: And really heavily.

S: That's how it has worked against you and the profession so far, that it's one of the most powerless, downtrodden, divided and conquered kind of women's work.

M: Right, and it means the girls are generally scared. They feel that they're stepping out of line and they call me a troublemaker. You know, I'm not fighting for our rights, I'm causing trouble. I'm an instigator, I'm trying to play morality, trying to grandstand. You know? For my own personal reasons. What they could be, God I don't know.

S: Sitting around with your files and making phone calls all day is really grandstanding for your personal benefit. (They laugh.)

M: Yeah, sure. But people really started hitting the roof when we had a press conference. That's when all this started, they seem to forget it was only page 7, or 14, and that I was there for them, they think I must have some reason outside of doing it. My reason is that I'm tired of seeing all this, I know that it's wrong and I know I can do something. I know all of us can do something about it. All we have to do is forget about being afraid. You know, it's just "uh, uh. Hold it, you can't intimidate me. That's against the law." Every step that's pulled against us, right down the line, is against the law. They know it. They just don't think that we know it.

S: Does it have anything to do with the after-effects of feminism, what you are claiming? That women generally and perhaps finally in particular like in your profession, are now a little less willing to say okay, so do it to me?

M: Unfortunately the girls aren't really doing that yet. Some of them are, but very few. And usually the ones that are do it only up to the point where they have to give their names. When it comes to that, they start backing down. Most of them have had lots of dealings with the police before, they go to the Labour Board and they won't do anything, and then they go the Human Rights Commission and get told it's not a human rights issue. Well it's not a human rights issue. They shoot too low when the issue is one of illegal acts like extortion. It's not plain light harassment.

S: So authorities can count on your intimidation.

M: And knowing that we'll be humiliated in court.

S: Like rape cases, where women are automatically guilty cause that doesn't happen to nice girls.

M: Right. There are still laws that talk in terms of women being solicited for sex if she is of chaste character. A woman of chaste character who is hassled for that, right?

S: So you're up shit's creek since in your profession you are by definition...Which leaves at least two issues assumed. I mean, it's so out of synch with the facts and the trends of the times. I'm fascinated by certain conjunctions right now of high fashion and low life, partly perhaps as a spin-off after the sexual revolution. In that backwash there is a convergence of styles from haute-sleaze to strippers working in narrative forms that suggest glamour or school marm or nunishness, and disco fashions that throw back to Frederic's of Hollywood. The new stereotype of what is desirable or a successful kind of woman is almost



compulsively promiscuous. If we can still use a few of those quaint, charming terms ourselves. The "good" ones are acting out "bad" and liberation ends up in the nitty-gritty of not being all that choosy. Or supporting a man. But all this leaves us in a strange situation. The rules and behaviour that used to define good and bad no longer apply to most people's lives. The laws are still those of chaste behaviour.

M: This may sound terribly naive. But I still do have a bit of faith — not necessarily in any person or any system — but in the fact that every person and system can be embarrassed. The general public and average person does have a certain level of intelligence that's accepted. And if you allow a court of law or any institution to do something that is just totally outrageous and improper and everyone knows it then you can probably get enough people to assist you in dealing with the problem properly. Whether it takes retrials and going up the ladder or not. The only problem with going up the ladder is that the politics get heavier. Heavy politics gets really worried about what the general public might say. The general public is generally misinformed and that's why they say a lot of the stupid things that they say. Then it would be time to really work hard on an educational program, on the public profile for people like us. That should even be started right now. I get somewhat distressed about stories that are like this thing in the *Globe*, someone's personal opinion and his disappointment at stripping today and says zip about what's been happening in our business. I may end up floating in the lake for what I am trying to do, taking cases to court.

S: Let's hope that's unlikely. But you are in a sense extra-legal because you're outside the moral structure. The rules that are false anyway are false today in a different way. If we acknowledge that, we can see that there are discriminations made against women generally and certain women especially because of their sexual nature, their sexuality or because of their jobs. That isn't the same issue really - but when they converge you can't separate role restrictions. When you're in a job that exploits the underside of moral rules you are doubly powerless. You have been over-defined and because of that, economically, socially, you have double ground cut from under your feet: you don't, the splits over that chasm, that vacuum that would like to rule you right out of court.

M: You'd think they'd learn from experience. They can't just get rid of us.

S: Why would anyone want to? Dance is the oldest form there is. Somebody invented it all when the mood was upon them. Probably nude. Probably for some erotic reasons.

M: The problem there is that we still aren't acknowledged as dancers. That's hard to fight because there is a large majority of girls who do not dance well, have not studied in any way, don't have costumes, are strung out. I don't want to make judgements about anyone's act.

S: Aren't those the victims? The kids who don't have a background, education, a future? Who are exploitable?

M: Yes. But then again I have no education, no money, no background. But I do have a future. So that's really not an ultimate excuse. That's maybe the reason why they're in the position they are, but that doesn't mean it's an all-time rule, you know? It can be broken. I'm an example and there are plenty other examples of that. To lump them all in that category is really a dangerous thing because that can be an excuse to push people in that kind of category under a shelf.



Photos by Gail Bryck

S: It is unconscionable to ignore those who are really exploited. Or to say that's entertainment, not Art in some acceptable forum.

M: But then again, remember what society we're in. They will.

S: Perhaps you suggested something again, though. Was your profession a training ground for you, making you the articulate, obviously intelligent, well-informed, extraordinary force in your society?

M: I don't know how much in itself. In a lot of ways, yes. I was a rather, uh, militant youth and got in trouble for...everything. But I was quite shy and not outspoken at all before I started dancing, which has been six years. I started studying before that. I always wanted to do something like this, not necessarily being a stripper, but doing dance. So I studied and did some theatre workshops and worked in theatre, mostly on the technical side. But I was snowed under, no money, had to do something. I'd worked in factories, sold tickets to rock'n'roll concerts, you name it, worked as hard as I could just to earn enough money to keep myself in dance classes. I finally ended up in a job teaching dance. And that was so low paying I found I was really stagnating. Teaching the same things to the same people day after day. Not enough money to, really live or take the classes I

wanted to upgrade my own art. Not even exercise. I got to the point I wasn't sure I could do the things I could do when I started. So I thought I had to perform. Went around, tried to find things to perform in and there's just no way. Toronto Dance Theater: a closed shop. The National Ballet? I wasn't ten years old and in grade five. So what is the outlet? The odd television special? Gallery space where you're lucky if you don't end up paying them to perform? And so...

S: Which is why your profession is so terrific. I love seeing dancers, especially those who are working in a popular form, who are entertainment. It gives me ideas, 'cause I like to dance and feel really good you know, up to things in general. I'm not trained, I just like to move, to stretch out. A dancing fool. But dancing has to do with a very practical intelligence to me, with making a connection directed by your body's conditioning and other kinds of awareness, like what other dancers might do in a given situation. It changes with times, styles, whether you're dancing alone or in some kind of dialogue with other people dancing.

M: I like to see dancers too and I don't always want to go down to the O Keefe. I don't enjoy that all the time. There are other things I'd like to see too, and there isn't anything. In terms of night clubs what is there. As far as I know there is only

one that has a floor presentation of sorts and that's the Oriental Palace.

S: And that kind of show dancing can be a drag in another way. What I like about stripping is that when it's good, sometimes when it's bad, there's not only dancing, there's wit, there's skill involved, incredible presence and sense of humour. That sense of humour may be unique to the form because it comes from women who've had to go around all the blocks and are there dealing with that. Right off the top of the deck.

M: Right. That could be great if we didn't have all the hassles. We don't want to give the impression we're all nuns in our private lives or that we want to make strip-tease that kind of a moral issue. Actually we're taking relatively little or no moral stands as the general public sees them. We're taking a moral stand in terms of civil liberties and human rights. And in terms of getting right down to business with legal protection and contracts, fair representation and working conditions. I'd like to be working more often, actually. It's the only way I can keep my weight down. I've had the flu all this week.

(The phone rings again - the third time during this interview - and Mary talks to a girl reluctant to make her court date next morning, charging a club owner.)



SOFT CORE (or the meat that matters)

THE STORY SO FAR:

Details have been repressed in the interest of starting (again, immediately), but it seems that the central character has endured a fairly typical past for a small-town girl who finally became ambitious as well as rebellious. Those aspects of her story make up the bulk of current CanLit and "the new woman's novel." Therefore the narrator (another woman, called I) has left unaccounted such factors as having been raped at the age of twelve on account of her size and innocent nature, growing up in the sixties, late-blooming sex with a maniac midget and then with a large urban Jewish hippy with whom Shei had her first orgasm, moved to the country, and who Shei married, of course, for awhile, and her escape from all that in pursuit of the intellect.

As the story begins Shei is at the end of another cycle. Or so Shei implies and I go along with it for the sake of not having another debate (which is, by the way, the only significant species of "dialogue" found in this document). Five years before, at 24, Shei got out of her marriage and into a mortgage with a leftist, avantish professor from England who taught film history and crit at the same university where Shei was stalled in her third degree and teaching part-time. Both her love and professional life had apparently ground to a halt in a series of confrontations, however. A year has been spent in an escalation of panic, achievements that don't come to much, and some liberations. In the process of writing her doctoral thesis on D.H. Lawrence Shei has taken to drinking alone and to public athletics. After several tries her lover has fallen for somebody else. Shei has had a series of unimportant affairs that have not been at all disagreeable. Her chairman has not thought that much of her manuscript. Shei's made friends with a feminist from Pennsylvania teaching there on a limited contract. Shei's turned down a last-minute chance at the job that would keep her around and perhaps in the running for one more term.

So it is 1976 and Shei's moving out of the large and extravagant house that Shei now disowns to live in somebody's basement and make frequent visits elsewhere. On one of her trips to a larger city that's not far away, Shei goes to hear an evening of jazz. Here Shei makes the acquaintance of one quite magnetic-type dude, I suppose Shei would want us to call him, though Shei was quite unaware at the time of just how the fancier pants at that bar were in fact procured. Jazz being a passion of hers, and being well - trained in thorough research, and Dizzy Gillespie not getting much younger, Shei went back again and sat at the bar. The third night Shei went was a Saturday.

From Chapter One, "The Pimp and the Professors."

Lucas came at last into the line of her vision

as if the doubles could conjure some specially materialized genius. His style tonight was different than on their previous meetings, different from those assembled around them, as different perhaps as irregularities in her address — and in her own dress, which was, as usual, cheap-chic eclectic.

Tonight they were both presenting themselves with a forethought consideration that managed some ease with elegance and gave the impression of being made ready for anything. As Shei ordered his drink and another double, Shei went for the point and told him that this was the night that was his if he wanted it.

He was wearing a wide-brimmed hat with which he could shade his eyes and expression at will. He was eyeing her openly, calculating approval of her combinations of black, bright red and long blonde. Now his head went down just enough so his face was masked except for the smile that assumed the curve of another attitude.

"Every night is my night" was all that he said. In the way he said it and in the way he was dressed Shei couldn't have found much in difference. Neither, it seemed, was Shei to permit the peremptory assumptions that had been her strategic tact — or her lack of it — in the war and piece of the sexes. The negotiations which had her coming back to their blatant sexual content and irresolution were not over yet. If Shei couldn't score a direct, quick hit and get over and out of it, Shei would have to consider subtle manoeuvres. For once Shei did more or less as Shei was told when ordered to sit herself and to be quiet while Lucas went and took care of some business.

After his first attempts at misleading impressions upon her, taking her downstairs to hear a band he described as "his". Lucas had told her, in some small detail what his business was. Since Shei was not at the moment defined by anything Shei especially did, Shei did not solicit such information from people Shei met. And that he was a pimp had not come as confession (nor quite as a warning or signal to her) but as some explanation: not for what Shei might have expected but rather for how it distinguished them both from what was common currency, as Shei discovered, in human transactions at that place in time. What Lucas implied was that his profession was what made him able to single her out as someone who could be as purely sensuous as Shei first seemed to him, and then as sharing with him the tastes and the tendencies of connoisseurs. His status here would seem to depend on his reputation for not indulging himself on the side: and not with the kind of white meat that Shei represented. That he might incline towards making exceptions for her seemed about as strictly irrelevant as the notion that Shei might be all that (indeed) representative. In fact Shei thought it was none of her business: nothing to do with her in effect.

But the evening proceeded about like the others. Lucas came and went. He introduced her to people he characterized as his brothers or partners or friends. Her he always called the Professor, or his woman, or friend. Sometimes Shei simply told people her name and smiled

through ambiguous, wide-shouldered poses of cool and correct but approachable friendliness. Other times Shei corrected the misapprehension that Shei was employed. Often Shei let loose with one of her dizzying rounds of arresting verbal attack, largely inspired by the doubles assisted in measures by what Shei assessed as the boring obscenity of her piece-fully passive inaction and how Shei amused herself in her observation of others and thinking her thoughts.

The style that resulted when Shei found herself interrupted was made up of rapt, rapid four-letter and multi-syllable words, delivered in complex structures that Shei juggled through sudden shifts in her accent and tone as Shei consciously quoted some system of post-metaphysical thought, a great work of literature, a remnant of various pop and sub-cultures, odd spellings and puns. It produced some fascination, some confusion and consternation but Shei rarely paused for any response and constantly broke in on those who might have been talking to her. Shei was like a machine gun that fired at unpredictable provocations. It wasn't so much what Shei said but assorted ways that Shei said it that found their mark in approval and irritation. But Shei had an answer for that one since Shei said that Shei wasn't there to be liked or even just heard because it was only hot air, wasting words as long as so much talk was cheap, cheap as fucking dirt. Or was that dirty fucking, Shei said.

Lucas came up and looked in her face occasionally. With a skilled set of gestures he cut them both off from the gaze of a crowd growing at an unsteady pace towards midnight. The stealth of his hands was as bold as his publicly screening and he went straight for something crucial to touch: her nipples or even more private, shrinking and straining, of course, simultaneously.

"You know you are feminine. Heh? You know that?" he might start by saying. "You are really feminine. More than you know. You got something I want." Then tweaking or plunging. "It ain't necessarily that. You got certain...knowledge. Professor."

"Yeah, sure and feminine's fuck-all to do with it. I take care of myself. So long as I keep doing that I don't need a thing from anyone. Specially no shit," Shei might say in counterpoint to material evidence they both felt at the time. But then he would stop feeling that and stand off.

"Miss ma'am. Positive. You must think positive. All the time, all my thoughts is the pause-i-tiv. If you runnin' with me you must talk pozzitive."

"I'm being positive. Who said I was running with anyone? What happens just happens. That's fair enough. I'm not making investments, you know, with my time. It's not like a side where what isn't positive has to be negative, quod erat demonstrandum, it's not a race-relation, it's not undeveloped like that. Maybe a question of class. There's always some conflict in that. We're all stuck with that. For now. To a certain extent. But I got no time for bullshit illusions. What do you intend? Do you have the class for it?"

"There's some things I like about you. I like my woman to think about taking care of themselves," Lucas responded, his palms folded into his arm-

pits. "That is a necessity." Then as Shei smiled and narrowed her gaze and reached for his thigh he went on, "but you always arguin' at me."

"What the fuck am I arguin' at you about?" Shei said, not concealing amusement.

"You do not let me finish what I am saying to you. That's another thing. You must let a man speak without always talkin' right back, interrupting him what he is thinking..."

"Can I help it if nobody's fast enough for me? I just go the distance and start coming back before most people get it outright. What's to stop me from going, you know, in my head? As long as I meet a few on the way back. I mean, you might as well know that I do that. You're better off knowing, believe me, a bit about how my brain works than any amount of what kind of shit I might do with my body. You want any part and what you take or leave is the whole fuckin' deal."

"My bitches don't swear. You know that? You've got a very bad mouth. You must correct that, you want to stay around me."

"Shit, Lucas. Fuck off. Who said I was staying?" Shei stood and made ready to go. Feeling that Shei had taken the point and taking her time, Shei didn't leave it (or leave) at that.

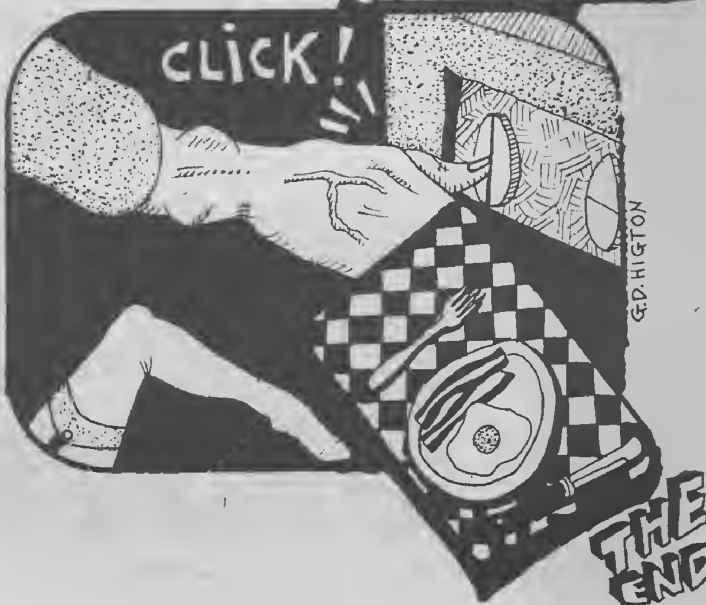
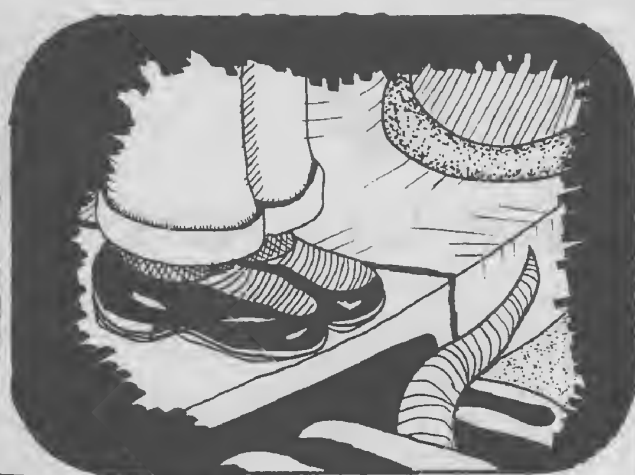
WHAT HAPPENED NEXT:

The night goes on — and on — in a series of detours, diversions, de-lays that come finally to consummation. Before that devoutly double desire is arrived at there are disco scenes where our heroine dances with raunchy, detached ecstasy that attracts a degree of attention. Shei beats Lucas besides at a pinball machine in one dazzling sequence of sexual metaphor. They go in and out of Don Mills and on and off Spadina until Lucas drops a C-note at poker while Shei looks around with acute stupefaction at the kind of mid-rent high-rise apartment Shei does not customarily see. It leads her to ponder her past and (for what it is worth) how far Shei has come in the present.

But at last it gets pornographic and then Shei goes back to the provinces poorer for plenty of drinks, the hotel room they stayed in and one traffic ticket Shei got for a turn that wasn't permitted. Shei wires three roses to Lucas and does not include her name or address. Within a couple of weeks he has traced her and Shei has been hatching a plan for some likely outrageous, post-structural project, illustrated perhaps, about their adventures. Shei has one more meeting with her thesis supervisor (who looks, by the way, like a cross between a beach boy and a Jesuit) and that ends in tears. The day after that Shei comes back to Toronto, for good or whatever comes next. Then it starts becoming some quite different tales, not unrelated, as Shei settles in to testing the premise that blondes, bad girls and some independents indeed have more fun and do live to tell all. Or at least the good parts.

From *City in Cinderella*, a novel by Sheila Wawanash

TALES
from the
UNDER-
GROUND
or
ACRES
of
THIGHS!



THE END

TRUE CONFESSIONS: THE OTHER SIDE OF T N A

by Brad Thrasher

Sipping beer in a Yonge Street basement waiting for the band to begin. The first thing you notice is that none of the faces look familiar. Probably close to five hundred people in here and I can't find any recognizable bodies. Spot a lady sitting by the stage who looks like she's here on a cultural exchange program from the Dave Mason School of Music. Maybe there's some real writers in the crowd. You know, the kind of writers who explain events in terms of locating one's centre of gravity by developing a natural affinity for the cultural environment through affixing one's psyche in the heart of the cosmos. In the seventies they call it lifestyle. In the sixties they called it good dope.

Everybody knows that chicks can't play rock. What are they going to do? Flash some skin and sing about the guys who ripped up their hearts? Will they sing about something real? Like how they honestly feel when Richie Redface can't get it up after working all night just to get her to say yes?

Ruby T's walks slowly toward the microphone, swaying gently to Julia Bourgue's rhythmic intro. Janit comes in on drums, Anna on bass. The audience sits quiet, pensive. Ruby begins the first verse to "White Rabbit" as Alina kicks on the keyboards. The audience seems to pause as if looking for stage direction. Janit changes the beat. The crowd picks it up and starts dancing in their seats.

A glassy-eyed hippy leans over and asks, "Surreal pop?" The audience was moving with the band, waving back at the stage, and the stairwell was lined four abreast with people content to listen, if they couldn't get inside. Even an untimely short that cut the vocals couldn't stop the band, the crowd or Ruby T's. The lady kept on dancing while technicians scurried about trying to make repairs. They left the stage at the natural conclusion of the song, wanting to give the audience more, yet too shy to ask. Greg Goddo wasn't though as his team of roadies repaired the sound. "Do you want some more?" he shouted amid the cheers.

The encore was apt. True Confessions wouldn't try to steal a show anywhere, including a Yonge Street basement. But they did bring the crowd to its feet with an extended version of "Good Night Baby".

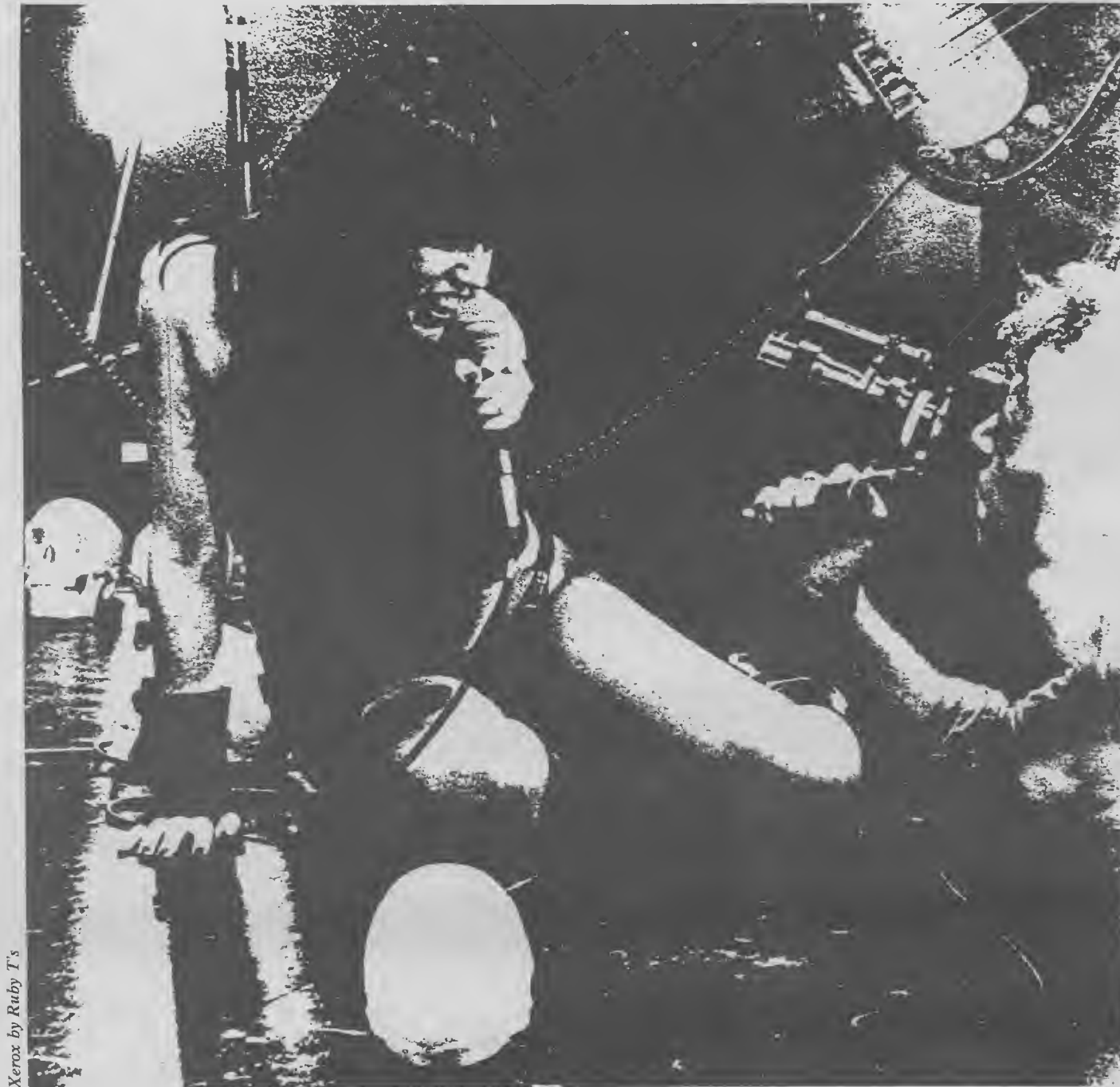
Some day there will be a Congeniality Award given during the Juno's and Greg Goddo is going to win it. Problem is they'll call him a suck for being a professional.

Julia raises her glass while maintaining eye contact. The lady is aware and you watch her ease into the answer. "Yeah, well it's getting back to street level. The music is just more accessible to the audience," she says. "It's derivative but it's also innovative."

Listening to the ladies talk reminds you of the first time you saw Alice Cooper playing Rondeau Park in Chatham or Sly Stone working a pin ball machine between sets in Leamington Roller Rink. He's an old sock now but only because he found an audience, played his heart out, fell in love with Doris Day, then retired.

He's an old sock now but only because he found an audience, played his heart out, fell in love with Doris Day, then retired.

True Confessions works hard at the one thing that will always keep rock music alive. They give it to the audience. Perhaps Ruby understands as much as Bo Diddly, Dick Wagner or even Pick Withers. "You do what you do best, it's fun ... I'd rather be remembered than known."



Xerox by Ruby T's

REGION REPORT:

ROCK OF THE WESTIES

Alasdair Russell

three personnel changes in the last two months, the group is tighter than ever and determined to make the airwaves ROCK.

On tour throughout B.C. this July, LIVEWIRE open for JIMI HENDRIX clone RANDY HAN-

MAX MOUSE:



Joanne Hovey/Rough Idea

LIFE CAN BE VICIOUS/ A BAR-ROOM SAGA

Max Mouse & the Gorillas are an unusual band of home-grown originals — unusual in the sense that in England & America, their credentials as up and coming contenders are firmly established on the strength of a glowingly reviewed single ('Can a Gorilla Sing the Blues?' blw 'Love Can Drive You'), and their onstage involvement with the Stiff tour in N.Y. City. But in Toronto, virtually no one has heard them. Glen O'Brien, in Interview magazine, described Max as sounding

Anyways, that was a few years ago. Everybody's been through country, country-rock. The last band our organ-player was in was a heavy-metal trio. He hated it.

George: Well, Max Mouse isn't a country-rock band.

Max: It isn't? Well, thank you!

George: It's more of a fusion band.

Max: We just played a bluegrass festival this weekend. I was explaining to everybody that bluegrass means: get a van, six 24's, get as drunk as you possible can, come on to as many people as you can and see what happens. That's what bluegrass means in Ontario, if not everywhere.

cowboys are good-looking tough characters appeals especially to the artsy crowd; y'know, secret leanings toward wearing tough clothes and being tough people. Manhattan Marlboro country.

Sheila: I think it appeals more to Madison Avenue. It's that last pastoral myth of America playing out its inevitable death throes. But there's also a lot of satire, and I think that self-parody aspect is really important cause it's where it starts to trip over its own categories, and maybe its own feet, but revealing that pastoral myth for exactly what it is.

George: I think you're talking about Vogue

fighters, you won't have people throwing things at you, because it will be people who'll say, "Yes, that sounds interesting. I think I'll attend." And they go because they want to make it. If we could join all the little centres together we all could make a modest income, playing to the right audience. And I don't think anybody really wants to take it much further than that. Now, somebody like Robert Gordon is really in a slot. He's gotta make it big, y'know? But it's because it's so impossible to live on the smaller scale. But if we can go down to the Nelson, back to Ottawa, over to Peterborough, go to Oshawa, maybe to Belleville,

AS8502

999

ALIVE AND WELL AND CONQUERING CANADA By P.L. Noble

Well, Toronto, by the time you read this article, you'll have the opportunity to put its contents to test. The exciting and powerful pop group from England 999 will be returned to Toronto for another rare visit. The venue is the same as the last...the Edge. If you attended one of the gigs during 999's three night stint a few months ago, you'll understand what it's like to witness strong'n'rhythmic pop-anthem oriented delicacies.

999's recording history began when they established their own independent record label, which in turn landed them a major recording deal. Says vocalist and rhythm guitarist Nick Cash: "We used our first independant single 'I'm Alive Quite/Disappointing' on our own Labritain records merely as a bargaining stance. We eventually landed a contract with United Artists because they were the company that gave us the most freedom to experiment on our own musical level, art work, and how we handled our career, which we considered to be of the utmost importance."

It's no surprise that other major labels wanted to sign one of England's most aspiring 'new' bands to their roster. But when a group of artistic development executives stipulate how a band should play their music and dress accordingly, the musicians involved begin to have second thoughts. "I think they wanted to clean up our image a bit and make it much more commercial," suggested Cash. "We just didn't want to do that. We wanted to retain what we in fact started off as. We wanted the sole freedom of being able to choose what single we put out and what producer we felt was necessary for our studio work. Although there are some things that do go wrong in that system, we're still in a healthier position as compared to a lot of bands. Some of the number one acts in England have no control over what single their record company wants to put out... their word means virtually nothing."

During 999's recording career, they've worked with two of England's most highly acclaimed producers, Andy Arthurs and Martin Rushent. "I enjoyed working with both producers because each one brought out something in the band's sound that the other was incapable of doing," remarked Cash. "Andy's gone on to produce his own records on the Radar label. If you've listened to his successful single 'I Can Detect You For 100,000 Miles' it's not surprising to suggest that he's something of a 'pop experimentalist'. He enjoys working strictly in the pop framework, yet, he tends to experiment beyond it's capacity also."

"We decided that we wanted to try something different for the second album *Separates*, so we eventually contacted Rushent because we admired his work in the past. He always came to a lot of our gigs. We knew he was interested in the 999 sound. After *Separates* was finally completed, we were extremely pleased."

"We were especially pleased with 'Homicide' because it turned out to be a big surprise. We rehearse

Photos by Peter L. Noble



technical terms it's difficult to capture the sound of the bass and drums. People in the recording business are essentially frightened of having the bass and drums recorded on the same level as the remaining instruments."

Says Guy, "We're going to fix up that particular problem on our next album. By recording more records, you learn to become much more critical."

"The bass and drums must push the group along on our future records," states John. "In effect, you get the strength all the way through. All of the musical elements should be equally sharing the load. That's where reggae gets its power from...its beautiful bass and drums."

Due to 999's sincere approach to rock'n'roll, it's no surprise the band will continue to evolve and change their recording techniques and writing styles. "On the second album in-

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COOL CLASS: WHITE ON BLACK

EUROREPORT

BOREDOM HAS NEVER BEEN SO INTENSE!

by Olivier Cossard

"To go and see a Jam, Buzzcocks or X-Ray Spex's concert in 1979 is to remember" Elizabeth D.

DA DOO RON RON

Yes my dear, it is definitely to remember the good fun we had last year, or two or three years ago. To remember our naive hopes about a hypothetical change in the record-business' sterilized world. To remember those fresh and indecent lyrics, those wild parties, and those crazy stage-acts. And to remember all those new bands coming from nowhere and suddenly exploding on the scene. One could say; at least there was a scene. Because now there are 30 different scenes, and they're not interconnecting that much. Yeah, a new scene, a new thing. But all this is almost totally gone. Bye bye. Cíao amigo. It's afterpunk time now.

History is tough with naive beginners, germ-free adolescents, arty revolutionaries, easy-going amateurs and instant co-opters. One must be able to wait a little while to realize who were the creators and who were the followers. Do we have to look at things with a distance which will allow us to avoid temporal or superficial phenomena? Is it possible to be actor and voyeur at the same time? Find your own answer.

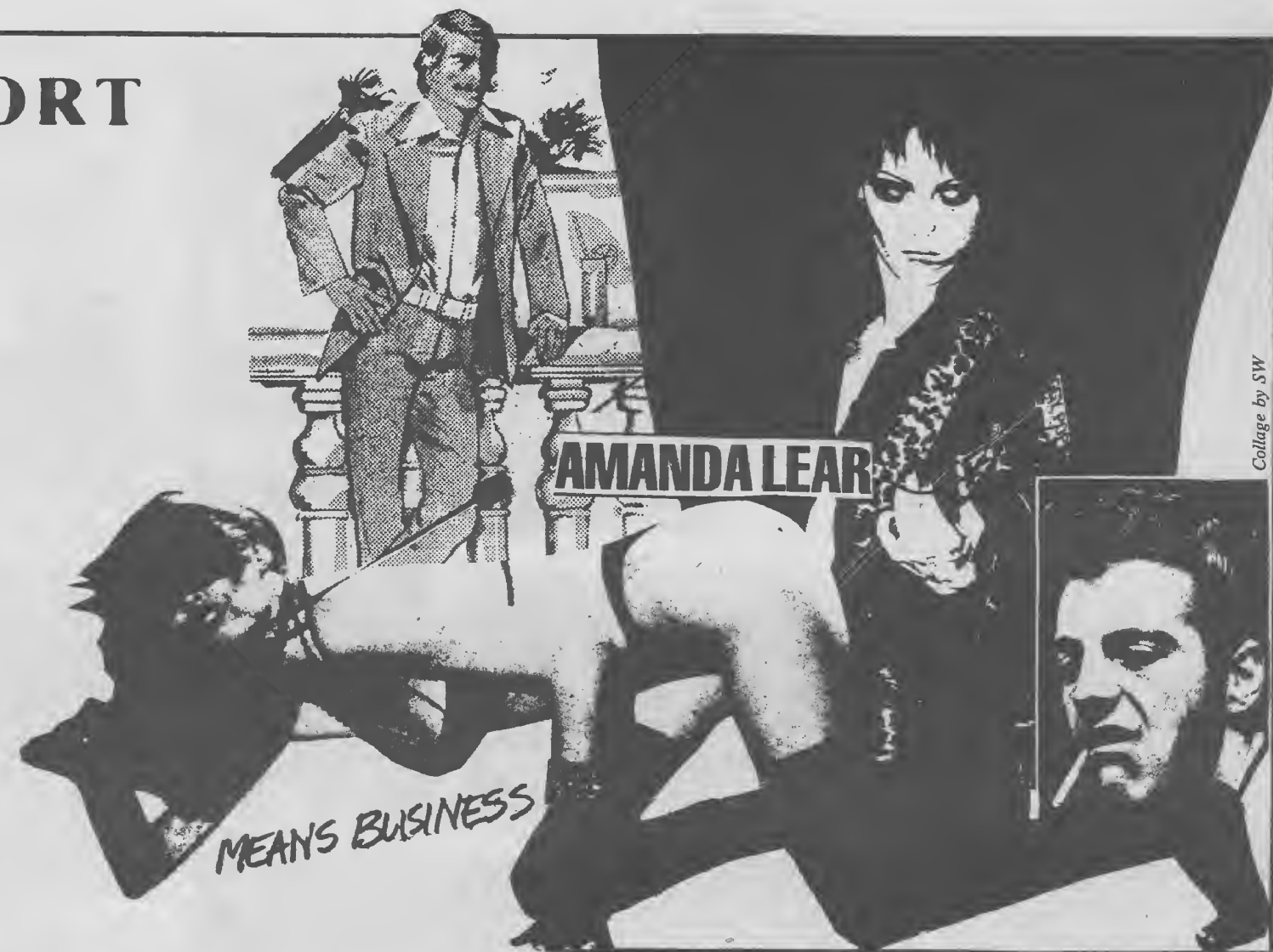
So fortunately I won't have to remember the Pistols' lousy rhythms, or Damned's bad taste, or the Dead Boys' pseudo hard-punk, or Radio-birdman's terrible look. The others will survive and will probably get better; I'm talking about the Saints, the Diodes, Generation X, Clash etc...The arty ones will go back to artschools, the rowdy ones to the street or to the factory, and the trendies will find a new look for sure.

Ian Dury in *Liberation*, Nov. 78: "Vermeer is my favourite painter. I like Brueghel and Klein too. I like sex, drugs and rock'n'roll but what I like most is swimming. In the twenties in England there was a girl named Mary Stopes; she wrote a lot of books about couples, love and so on, and they all sold real well. She played an enormous role in the movement of sexual liberation, but you know what? She was a virgin. So you see, if you wanna taste ecstasy, you don't need to drink up the bottle. I like Ornette Coleman and Don Cherry. I hate violence. I hate America. I think England is the most modern country in the world."

BRIDGES OF LONDON

Yes in a way England is the most modern country in the world because there changes are never radical but always effective. In the right time and with the right people. But Stiff records are still losing money, and it's not Costello's and Dury's success which are going to solve the problem. The problem being that the level of inspiration has really dropped off.

So of course Siouxsie & the Banshees left the way they came. Indifferently. There wasn't much room for a cheap Patti Smith screaming suicidal visions of sick loves, and crying upon the images of our Hitlerian environment. This romance/banshees/frozen poetry pill was a little hard to swallow. The story of the band is pretty funny, and pretty weird too. Although a fairly good number of new bands including women, or sometimes all-women bands, have appeared recently, macho-rock is still the answer for howling crowds. So don't be surprised if you get to read that Siouxsie is a nice looking girl, but



Collage by SW

can quietly hate or madly cherish. But with a new look which will help to impose the new sound: the sound of apocalypse. PILtd: a record dedicated to the salt of the earth. A product dedicated to the death of cleanliness and decency. We'll applaud for that. Johnny Rotten Jekyll-newwivist-babykiller has turned into Hyde-Lydon-coroner-revolutionary fascist technician of the postpunk era. His parisian concert was a shipwreck. The shipwreck of a band and the suicide of a living-dead. Two years after the Pistols' premiere at le Chalet, nothing had changed. Or so little. Nothing except the image. Did Rotten/Lydon get Mac Laren's lesson (the great R&R swindle)? I wonder.

Thousands of books are filled with demagogic and pretentious theories about art, religion, revolution and the rest of the crap. Keep rock out of it. Maybe Lydon is only a sadist; if he can't get pleasure, he will prevent us from getting any. I think he is more a masochist than a sadist. But on the whole we're not. How could we penetrate his tortured ways and visions? How could he get the message to us? One of the songs goes "all we wanted was to be loved...now I understand and I wish I could die". No comment. In 1977 Johnny's favourite records were P. Hammill, T. Buckley, Beefheart, K. Coyne, Nico, Can, and J. Cale. Again, no comment.

Anyway, Jah Wobble doesn't play much reggae on his bass, and Jim Walker should have stayed home in Vancouver (although he's not responsible for anything). The problem with a Lydon concert is that you will always find someone to tell you how much better it was the night before, the month before or the year before. In other words there's always a good reason or alibi for Rotten's mediocrity and easy destruction. I saw the band three times and each time it was like going to an airport. Now if I understand it,

the shipwreck of Public Image in Paris. Now let's stop that negative trip and let Jah tell us what's left. Well, what we find now are all the guys who were sure enough of themselves to promote something which wasn't exactly "the thing in the air" but was close enough so they could be part of the movement, sometimes on the very fringe, and still come up with new feelings. Names, names, names; Costello, Dury, Devoto, Ubu, Suicide, James Chance, Stranglers, Devo, Blondie, Television etc...and I didn't say a word yet about the COLD-WAVE, Cabaret Voltaire, Throbbing Gristle, etc...

PARIS COMA

Meanwhile, back in Paris. Paris whose punk scene has changed a lot since the early days: it's already fourth generation rock with new bands like Les Félés, Marquis de Sade, Go-Go Pigalles, Suicide Romeo, Coma or the Brigitte Bardots. Unlike before, it would be totally impossible to put them in the same bag. Go-Go Pigalles represent the everlasting myth of the "gay Parée" red lights, whores, pimps and killer cocktails. Marquis de Sade (great name) is some sort of a Nietzschean band. Suicide Romeo is the best. They were a little influenced by Talking Heads.

Singing French lyrics is the hardest thing to do for a froggy band because of the inadequacy of French for rock'n'roll. French is more descriptive than active, and requires a lot of adverbs and adjectives. But the words are more precise. With Suicide Romeo you just can't hear if they're singing in French, English or Japanese. That should be enough to demonstrate what a great job they've already done.

Coma is the first cold-wave band around here: they call themselves Clinik Organik Musik Anatomik. They are 3 guys playing synthesizers,

40 minute gig at Le Palace and got booed out by an unanimous crowd. It still costs 16 dollars to get in at Le Palace. Eno's sampler "No NY" is very fashionable, meaning in other words that everybody talks about but nobody buys it. The record that everybody carries around is (but of course my dear inspector Clouzot) Roxy's "Manifesto" because of the cover (so hot) and because of Roxy's glamorous come-back at Le pavillon de Paris.

ARBEIT VERBOTEN!

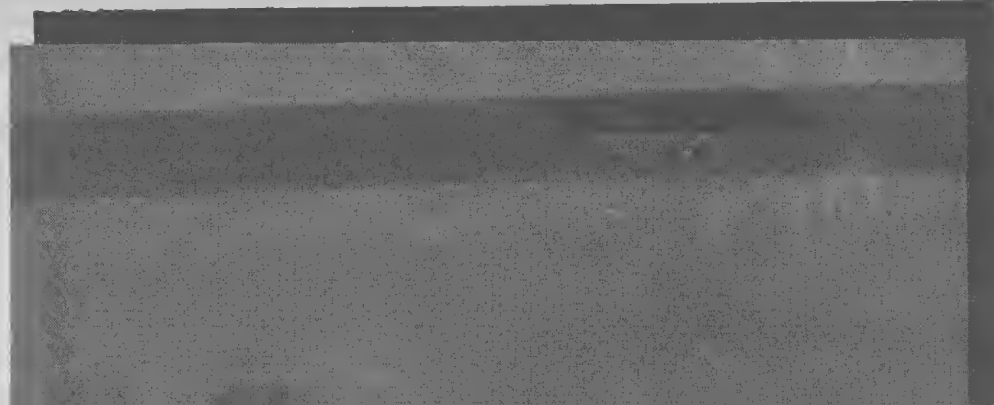
Now how could all that explain the fabulous return of German neo-romantism and the creation of the new eastern axis, Paris-Moscow? Films by Wim Wenders, Jonas Van Keulen, Rainer Fassbinder or Werner Herzog, dietrichian songs by Ingrid Caven and Anna Prucnal, bands like the Scorpions, Nina Hagen Band, Gregory and the Spions, Alban Berg's black opera 'Lulu' sold out at the Opera de Paris, new novelists and new painters. The list could fill up 2 pages.

Is it because of the end of political terrorisms, or is it because of Europe's old fascination for The Past in general? "Holocaust" has just been programmed this month in France and Germany, and it turned out to be a smash hit.

Once a week streets were empty, cinemas were deserted, and discos were closed: "Holocaust" was on TV. The series was a good alibi for a new exorcism of European traditional antisemitism. There had to be someone responsible for all that; Hitler will do. Of course there wasn't a word (except in leftist newspapers) about the Armenian holocaust, the Indian holocaust in northern and southern Americas, or about the French torturers in Algeria. The western world was frightened enough by those troubles in Iran, Chad, Nicaragua or China/Vietnam. It had to be remembered that we were and still are the cradle



ANK POSEUR!



Photos/design by Anne Milne



ock
nd of

He pisses defiantly in
sinks but never forgets
to disinfect.

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A CLASSY photographer, female and free, redheaded, attractive, good conversationalist, seeks serious PATRON. Of the arts, of course. Preoccupations: eating, drinking, paying the rent. If you'd like to come see my portfolio sometime, make contact through SHADES, Box 310, Station B, Toronto M5T 2W2 Code it as G: 36D

PRETTY much the same as above, but I'm blonde, rather slender, and write. Sometimes work with above on, uh, suitable projects. Code S: 32A

AS YOU are reading this your eyelids are getting heavy. You are getting sleepy. Sleepier. You want to do exactly as I tell you. Look in your wallet. Take out all the bills. Put them in an envelope, and address it to Box 310, Station B, Toronto M5T 2W2. You have a tremendous feeling of peace. Code M:00.

GOOD LOOKING blonde stud, six feet, local rock star, wants to hear from gorgeous gals for a good time. Send photo, explicit letter. Will reply to all comers. Code SX: 8 1/2

MUSICIANS

LEAD SINGER of deactivated band has material, needs players for concept band: 2 keyboards, guitar, bass, drums. No trends or fatties. Evan, 447-3564, 447-1335

PERFORMING/RECORDED new wave band. Toronto. Seeking inventive keyboard/synthesizer player. Ideally to double on sax. Send note and phone number to Box 310, Station B, Toronto, M5T 2W2. Code A:4.

RECORDS

FLIVVA'S album (*sympathetic ear*), a limited Dog 001 release, is still available at Sam's, Records on Wheels, Record Peddler, Millwheel, Canadian Spaces, Beachside Record Works and especially Cheap Thrills (Phil says buy here!). Peter Goddard said it was "a stunning work", "classy and controlled decadence". John Heimbecker, CKMS FM called it "rock and roll for the enlightened eighties", and "the best debut since QUEEN". Wilder Penfield referred to its "first

rate songs" as "sardonic". SHADES No. 4 encouraged Phil Schreiber to say lots of things for himself. So don't miss it and then be sorry you did.

PLASTIC PEOPLE of the Universe album, *Egon Bondy's Happy Hearts Club Banned* (see SHADES No. 3). 100 copies newly arrived from Europe. Available at Record Peddler, or from Box 310, Station B, Toronto M5T 2W2. \$15 \$1 postage in Canada, \$1.50 US.

THE FITS, "Bored of Education, Sailing to Hell b/w Just Lust." Stagefright Records; at Record Peddler, New Rose, Records on Wheels, the usual outlets.

MAGAZINES

019890. Volume 1 No. 1, June '79. A transition 'zine: PUNK with incipient social consciousness, from Buffalo. Recommended by SHADES, absolutely free if you write 019890 Magazine, PO Box 711, Ellicott Station, Buffalo, NY 14205 USA.

EUROCK: the Progressive Music Magazine. V2 No. 5 — Chrome, Univers Zero, Schneeball Records, Yugoslav rock, etc. \$1.50/ish, Archie Patterson, P.O. Box 13073, Portland, Oregon, 97213 USA.

RUDE magazine: from pornography to politics, like a slap in the face. In various formats. Available now, POSTCARD issue: coming soon the PUNK and CUNT numbers. \$5/ish to RUDE, Box 3 Station B, London, Ont. N6A 4V3 or ACE VISUALS, 390 Douro St., Stratford, Ont.

SPECIAL UPCOMING EVENTS

A HOT NIGHT IN JULY: burlesque and comedy review with live bands and a really great show to benefit the Canadian Association of Burlesque Entertainers. July 15, The Dream Factory, 8.00 p.m., \$10. For further info, watch the streets for a posters campaign.

SHADES classifieds: 25c a word, prepaid. In writing to Box 310 Station B, Toronto M5T 2W2 or call 921-8906. Deadline, 15th of the month. Display classified, \$14 per column inch.

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